

# Evaluation of the UN-Habitat's Strengthened Programme Review Mechanism December 2009 - September 2011

MARCH 2012

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>VIII</b>
Achievements	xi
Challenges	xii
Key Findings and Conclusions	xiii
Lessons Learned	xv
Recommendations	xvi
Next Steps	xviii
<b>1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 UN-Habitat Mandates	1
1.2 UN-Habitat MTSIP	1
1.3 The Strengthened Programme Review Mechanism	2
1.4 Organization of the Report	8
<b>2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Evaluation Objectives and Scope	9
2.2 Evaluation Criteria and Questions	9
2.3 Methodology	11
2.4 Evaluation Limitations	12
2.5 Management of the Evaluation	12
<b>3. EVALUATION FINDINGS: ASSESSMENT OF THE STRENGTHENED MECHANISM PERFORMANCE AGAINST EVALUATION CRITERIA</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Evaluation Findings on Relevance	13
3.2 Evaluation Findings on Effectiveness	16
3.3 Evaluation Findings on Efficiency	22
3.4 Evaluation Findings on Impact and Sustainability	26
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>27</b>

<b>5. LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS &amp; NEXT STEPS</b>	<b>31</b>
5.1 Lessons Learned	31
5.2 Recommendations	31
5.3 Next Step	34
<b>6.ANNEXES</b>	<b>35</b>
Annex I: Terms of Reference	36
Annex II: Revised Evaluation Work Plan	41
Annex III: Revised Draft Questionnaires	46
Annex IV: Bibliography	50
Annex V: List of Persons Interviewed	52
Annex VI: UN-Habitat Organisational Chart	54
Annex VII: HQPRC Secretary Terms of Reference	55
Annex VIII: PRC Effectiveness Tables	58
Annex IX: Project Approval Processes 2009 and 2012	62

## LIST OF TABLES

Figure 1.1:	Programme Review Mechanism Structure	5
Table 1.1:	Projects Reviewed by PRCS (December 2009-September 2010)	6
Table 1.2:	Projects Approved By Regional Offices December 2009 - September 2010	6
Table 3.1:	Perceptions on the Strengthening of the PRC Mechanism	19
Table 3.2:	Summary of Ongoing Challenges	23
Table 3.3:	Review of Sample Project Document Adherence To RBM	24

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIDA	Canadian International Development Assistance
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
ENOF	Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework
EPAS	Electronic Performance Appraisal System
GD	Global Division
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HPM	Habitat Programme Manager
HQ	Headquarters
HSO	Human Settlements Officer
HSFD	Human Settlements Finance Division
IMDIS	Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRD	Monitoring Research Division
MTSIP	Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan
OEDD	Office of the Deputy Executive Director
OED	Office of the Executive Director
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
PAG	Programme Advisory Group
PMO	Programme Management Officer
PRC/HQPRC	Programme Review Committee/Headquarters Programme Review Committee
PSD	Programme Support Division
RBM	Results Based Management

ROAAS	Regional Office for Africa and Arab States
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
ROEETC	Regional Office for Eastern Europe and the Transitional Countries
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
R-PRC/RPRC	Regional Programme Review Committee
RTCD	Regional and Technical Cooperation Division
SSHSD	Shelter and Sustainable Human Settlements Development Division
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Reliable and Timely
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

In late 2011 the senior management of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) initiated an evaluation of the Programme Review Mechanism for the period December 2009 to September 2011. 'Strengthening of the Programme Review Mechanism' was identified as one of the strategic 'quick wins' for the kick-start phase of the UN-Habitat Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP).

The MTSIP mandate is "to ensure that the Habitat Agenda, relevant Millennium Development Goals and other mandates (as reflected by the newly formulated and results-based MTSIP), are advanced through the development and implementation of programmes and projects that are consistent with and contribute to the achievement of Focus Area results". The MTSIP has five substantive focus areas : (i) Advocacy, monitoring and partnerships; (ii) Participatory urban planning, management and governance; (iii) Pro-poor land and housing; (iv) Environmentally sound and affordable urban infrastructure and services; and (v) Strengthening human settlements finance systems. A sixth focus area is "Excellence in Management", which includes the component of Results Based Management (RBM). The overarching goal of MTSIP is "to ensure an effective contribution to sustainable urbanization". Its vision is to help "create by 2013 the necessary conditions

for concerted international and national efforts to stabilize the growth of slums and to set the stage for subsequent reduction, in a reversal of the number of slum dwellers".

The mandate of the Programme Review Mechanism is to lead to broad-based institutional participation in programme review, the application of UN-Habitat technical expertise and agency-wide knowledge and lessons learned; and the design and planning of results-based programmes and projects"<sup>1</sup>.

The activities of the Programme Review Mechanism fall under the Programme Support Division (PSD). Initially, there were significant challenges, which led to its strengthening in 2009. These were:

1. The mandate and authority for the mechanism were not clearly defined;
2. The mechanism was not anchored to any management structure, in turn leading to poor coordination of its functions;
3. The membership of the committees assigned to programme review was too large and unstable, meaning it lacked the authority to institutionalize change;
4. In UN-Habitat there was generally weak alignment between the programmes and projects reviewed and the biennial work programme results;

<sup>1</sup> UN-Habitat (2008) *Guide Programme and Project Review Mechanism*, p.6.

5. There was poor internal collaboration and cooperation between the different units in UN-Habitat; and,
6. The lessons learnt and good practices identified in the field did not systematically inform programme formulation and implementation.

A reformed Programme Review Mechanism was therefore endorsed from December 2009. The changes started with the launching of the Program Review Committees (HQPRC and Regional PRCs) in December 2009. New PRC members were identified from within UN-Habitat to reflect the need for experienced subject matter experts and representation of cross-cutting functions.

There was also increased participation from the highest level of management to ensure decisions by the Program Review Committees had the required weight and authority to effect change. New operational guidelines and templates were created to ensure consistency in the project approval process regardless of their funding sources. These changes serve to rationalize the PRC structures and clearly define the roles and responsibilities for members as well as accountability lines. A PRC Secretary was contracted on consultancy basis to address the previous disconnect between the regions and headquarters. She has been supporting the PRC operations on a full time basis since April 2010. The PRC Secretary links the PRC structure connecting the regional PRCs to the HQPRC and the MTSIP committee. She is also responsible for the coordination of the activities of the committees.

Virtual members were also identified to work closely with the RPRCs in the programme

review process. This was expected to better link programme review activities across regions and with headquarters. There was also greater attention to the content of the minutes of the PRC meetings and the distribution of minutes amongst members. This was intended to close the communication gaps across the regions identified in the past. In the new programme review procedures, there was a two-tier review process, the HQPRC held twice monthly meetings to conduct reviews of briefs first and later review full project proposals.

Several reports on the strengthened mechanism were produced by external consultants and from UN-Habitat retreats (held during the period of December 2009 to June 2011). These reports found that challenges to efficiency still remained to be addressed. Some of the recommendations for greater efficiency were suggesting changes—of which some were subsequently implemented—in the PRC structure, governance and procedures relating to financial thresholds and exemption of some types of projects (such as emergency projects) to programme review.<sup>2</sup>

## Approach and Methodology

The evaluation was carried out by an external evaluator, Ms. Kathleen Webb, from 6 February 2012 to 18 April 2012. It examines the progress of the strengthened programme review mechanism for the period of December 2009 to September 2011, as part of a learning and improvement process at UN-Habitat.

<sup>2</sup> *In an ongoing process to strengthen the review mechanism further, UN-Habitat created a new organizational structure from September 2011. This is the Programme Advisory Group (PAG), which replaces the HQPRC and is anchored to senior level management through the Project Office. The Programme Advisory Group (PAG) meets weekly. There is also a stronger operational role for the PRC Secretary.*

The purpose and scope of the evaluation was two-fold. On the one hand it was to be a stocktaking exercise with an evaluation of the implementation and the results of the Strengthened Programme Review Committee (PRC) programme during the period December 2009-September 2011.

This review was to determine efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impacts of the programme and—equally important—lessons for the future.

On the other hand—and even more than the stocktaking exercise—the evaluation was to be a forward looking exercise. It was to give directions and recommendations of how to reform or further strengthen the Programme Review Committees in the future and enable them to tackle, in a flexible way, new demands and challenges of the reformed UN-Habitat.

In short, the forward looking evaluation was to be based on lessons learned, both positive and negative, and was to make specific recommendations on how to improve the PRCs' structure in a meaningful and complementary way.

Specifically, the evaluation was expected to answer six evaluation questions. These were:

1. To what extent has the Programme Review Mechanism supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat?
2. How effective has the Programme Review Mechanism been in providing quality assurance of projects and as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals?

3. To what extent, and how, has the Programme Review Mechanism led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects?
4. How successful has the Programme Review Mechanism been in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, in facilitating collaboration across organizational units and contributing to institutional learning?
5. What are the lessons learned from the experience of the Programme Review Mechanism, for example, related to project quality assurance, project approval, the organizational structure of the Programme Review Mechanism, and effective budget thresholds for PRC reviews?
6. What are the main recommendations for an effective project review system in UN-Habitat?

The review of projects was to be done by sampling project briefs and documents with a budget below USD100,000 reviewed by division directors and those under USD1 million reviewed by the regional PRCs to determine the quality of the review process and the quality of approved project briefs and documents, including use of logical framework and indicators of achievement.

A work plan was prepared in response to the six questions and to assess the performance of the mechanism against global evaluation criteria as defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) namely, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

The evaluator designed a series of questions covering the six key questions shown above as well as the UNEG global criteria (Annex II: Revised Evaluation Work Plan and Questionnaires). These questionnaires were applied in person to person interviews and emails were sent to the regions. They served to provide the basis for analysis and the key evaluation findings.

The evaluator interviewed management, PRC and PAG members and staff from divisions responsible for knowledge management and gender, to name a few. The results were compared findings from a literature and document review, a conference call, the UN-Habitat database and a PAG meeting. In all, the evaluator studied 52 documents including 18 approved project documents (Annex III: Bibliography).

Thirty-one face to face interviews were held (including meeting with eight persons during a PAG meeting). Twenty email responses were also received from UN-Habitat staff working in the regions in the RPRCs. The accuracy of the information received was cross-checked by comparing the interview results with documentation and making follow-up emails where necessary.

Confidentiality was maintained at all times. The evaluator received support from UN-Habitat in arranging interviews. There were some limitations faced by the evaluator due to inconsistencies in databases and non-availability of initial proposals against finalized ones.

## Achievements

There were significant achievements with respect to fulfilling the expectations of the strengthened review mechanism.<sup>3</sup> There was progress in four areas:

- The Programme Review Mechanism has supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat. The approved projects were well aligned to the work programme and MTSIP results;
- Greater engagement of technical expertise in programme review;
- Significant increase in horizontal integration towards programme review and its alignment to MTSIP through increased membership and some RBM training; and,
- A subsequent increase in breaking down of silos in UN-Habitat whereby technical and management expertise was applied more systematically towards programme review through regular meetings and virtual support.

<sup>3</sup> The section 'Achievements' provides the key findings derived from the evaluation findings on which the evaluator analysed performance of the reformed/strengthened Programme Review Mechanism against evaluation criteria. The stated 'rating' is based on EU Performance Evaluation ratings 2012. The full EU evaluation guide (February 5, 2012) can be found at [www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid](http://www.ec.europa.eu/europeaid). the ratings from 1-4 are:

1. *Highly Satisfactory*—full according to plan or better.
2. *Satisfactory*—on balance, positive aspects outweigh negative aspects.
3. *Less than Satisfactory*—not sufficiently according to plan, taking account of the evolving context, a few positive aspects, but outweighed by negative aspect.
4. *Highly Unsatisfactory*—seriously deficient, very few or no positive aspects.

The mechanism contributed to UN-Habitat as an institution, as it supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results. This was largely due to the proposal template which made specific procedural reference to the work programme and MTSIP results.

The achievements from December 2009 to September 2011 supported the overall performance of UN-Habitat in terms of its mandate and vision. The strengthening also improved efficiency of the programme review process, as it enabled more regular meetings, and consistent leadership and guidance.

There was also adherence to the basic RBM components for project management by those formulating the proposals. The PRCs, at both regional and headquarters levels, contributed to an improved quality of the proposals implemented through UN-Habitat (from December 2009 to September 2011). This was because both reviewers and presenters communicated more regularly with each other.

The Secretary provided support in project formulation, mentoring and clarification of technical issues. The quality of approved projects improved due to the strengthened review mechanism.<sup>4</sup> There is improved quality of programmes and projects in a large and complex portfolio of projects. The programme review mechanism has also had some success in ensuring there are more programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, albeit limited to the process of project formulation.

<sup>4</sup> *An assessment of the full impact of improved quality assurance in programme review would depend on the successful completion of the projects. This would require using a mechanism such as an output committee, or external evaluators. These have not been extensively carried out for a significant sample of the approved projects. In other cases, the projects are still underway.*

The respondents in the evaluation have indicated that there is more collaboration between the various units responsible for the focus areas than before December 2009. Institutional learning has also increased in the period of December 2009 to September 2011.

## Challenges

Progress has been made from December 2009, in terms of meeting the expectations of a strengthened review mechanism. However, the restructuring process now underway in UN-Habitat means it is necessary to re-visit the mechanism, its procedures and the project template.

UN-Habitat will have to redefine how the focus areas will be interpreted in the review process; whether they will be restated or revised. This may delay the ongoing process of changing the structure and procedures of the PRC. In light of the restructuring, the roles of key personnel and departments (knowledge, gender, finance, and monitoring and evaluation staff) which are aligned to an effective review process may change in terms of task re-allocation and possibly staff cuts.

This means new and existing staff will require additional RBM training/re-training and orientation to the programme review procedures. The re-structuring may also impinge on the PAG weekly meetings as new or relocated staff may not be ready with their proposals. This can delay the outcomes of the programme review meetings.

One challenge UN-Habitat must face is identifying feasible projects and reliable donors in the current global environment where resources are becoming scarcer.

Those who give UN-Habitat funds may want to partner more closely in the area of project formulation. The template is narrow in that it concisely refers to UN-Habitat and its mandates.

A more flexible template and guide are all the more urgent if partnering is to succeed. It is understood that UN-Habitat is in the process of redrafting its partnership strategy. The mechanism may have to be realigned against any new strategy emerging from within UN-Habitat or outside which can facilitate strong partnerships.

There remains the challenge of ensuring that PRC and RPRC members read the required preparatory documentation such as guidelines, proposals and any related country or regional strategy papers, prior to the programme review meetings. This means time must be allocated within UN-Habitat's Divisions for staff to understand the documentation and then adequately advise the presenters.

RBM is much more than tools and systems. To a great extent the basic tools and systems are in place. The challenge remains how to ensure compliance to project cycle management (including an RBM approach) and how to foster a 'results culture' in UN-Habitat.

UN-Habitat lacks the systems for utilizing project cycle management (using an RBM approach) beyond the early step of project formulation. There has not been enough commitment in UN-Habitat to all aspects of Managing for Results. For example, senior management commitment (to the mechanism) was less than expected as they were not active in the Steering Committee.

There is less accountability at the divisional levels of UN-Habitat, where there is more focus on getting outputs than on results. This means that although there is achievement, UN-Habitat still remains more driven to resource mobilization and delivery targets, rather than results.

## Key Findings and Conclusions

### *Programme Alignment and RBM*

The Programme Review Mechanism has supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat.

The approved projects were well aligned to the work programme and MTSIP results. They also met global standards for alignment, namely;

- Balancing the demand from the varying needs in the regions;
- Maintaining alignment with the overall vision and mandate of UN-Habitat;
- Delivering global stability while providing localized value; and
- Delivering value within the context of financial and resource constraints.

The proposals were aligned to the varying geographical areas—specifically a wide range of projects which would fit development needs in the regions, including post-conflict countries. At the same time, the proposals maintained alignment with the overall vision and mandate of UN-Habitat. This was ensured through the formulation guidelines and the feedback given to the regions by the PRCs.

The UN-Habitat approved projects showed concern to instability in many regions as well as sensitivity to the need for gender mainstreaming and meeting the needs of the youth. There was also concern for the use of local resources, and the incorporation of local tested initiatives for human settlement.

The mechanism was able to strengthen the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat. This is because of the improved systems and tools developed from December 2009. These have speed up the process of programme review, while at the same time giving more attention to quality assurance.

There is a growing change culture at UN-Habitat. However, the complexity of the templates mean increased workload for all levels of staff and a sense that completing the templates is a clerical exercise. These have contributed to a growing resistance to the templates which can hold change back.

### ***Quality Assurance and Advisory Role***

The Programme Review Mechanism was very effective in providing quality assurance of projects. To a lesser degree it was effective in acting as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals.

A report of the PRC Secretariat for the period December 2009 to December 2010 states "...the ultimate goal of the PRC was to strengthen efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and projects". The achievements for the same period included "improved quality" of project formulation. The evaluator concurs with this report. Quality assurance is evidenced in a remarkable improvement in the use of logical frameworks, strategies and risk assessments over the evaluation period.

The evaluation findings show that effectiveness of the mechanism improved quality assurance for the period under evaluation when compared with the period prior to December 2009.

The mechanism was able to address some of the programme review challenges UN-Habitat staff had faced by December 2009. This was done by having a two tier system for approval of project briefs first and then project proposals. This was followed by proposal approval at the level of the Executive Director. This is also evidence of an increasing involvement of several levels of management at headquarters and the region. The Steering Committee was not active, (despite being the linked with the Executive Director), therefore its advisory role was less than it could have been.

The procedures and tools (template and the checklists), have been directed at improving quality control. More important, the three components recognized globally as best for quality control (and RBM) namely the logic model, performance management framework and risk register were well designed. The risk register went beyond the expectations of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) model with very good sections on partner operational risk, financial risk, development risk and reputation risk. When applied, these three components can go far in quality assurance.

### ***Quality of Programmes and Projects***

The project proposals below USD100,000 are reviewed by Division Directors and those under USD1 million reviewed by the RPRCs improved in quality due to the strengthening of the review process. External reviews, interviews and review of proposals show the proposals were well written, and well aligned to MTSIP and the work programme. This makes them more

likely to succeed if implemented. In many cases, those formulating the proposals stated it was the first time for them to utilize a logic model, performance management framework and risk register. When well applied, these components can go far in ensuring projects are completed as planned.

### ***Coherence, Collaboration and Institutional Learning***

The Programme Review Mechanism contributed towards programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, and in facilitating collaboration across organizational units and contributing to institutional learning. At the time of the evaluation, UN-Habitat was in the process of restructuring; however, for the period under evaluation, work was divided according to the focus areas. In many cases each division worked in a closed environment. This working environment is similar to a silo, where all services, activities and funding were concentrated in separate divisions. This meant that other than the minutes of programme review meetings, much valuable information generated by programme review was not shared across all the organizational units.

There is evidence of close collaboration of the PRC with the Gender Unit, visible in the well-defined gender and youth indicators of the template and later, the approved proposals. There were gaps in participation of the division representativeness. However, by adding more senior members to the Programme Review Committee, it became more effective and the activities more coherent. The PRC members were able to expedite knowledge sharing and experiences. Dialogue was strengthened between members of the HQPRC and between the HQPRC and the RPRCs.

### **Lessons Learned**

There are several lessons learned from the period of December 2009 to September 2011, when the programme review mechanism was strengthened. These are that, firstly it takes time to get people to buy into change (including a new way of planning and formulating briefs and project proposals). Where professionals and others are given the opportunity to participate and provide feedback on new processes and are involved in the new change in their organizations, they will eventually accept it and own it, if it is shown to contribute to the success at their workplace activities.

Secondly, the credibility of a new process or approach in an organization is relative to the authority and responsibility it is given by an active senior management. Anchoring an activity or process higher in an organizational hierarchy makes it more credible and creates greater compliance to common outcomes. The higher the quality of a project proposal, the more likely the project is to be relevant to peoples' needs and therefore achievable.

Finally, people must be ready, willing and able to use new methods, processes and technologies, for them to adopt them. Unless all three factors (readiness, willingness and ability) are well in place, changes will not be sustained. Over time, presenters and others in charge of implementing UN-Habitat projects, accepted the benefits of high quality proposal writing. This means they were ready to use the template by September 2011, as they saw the need for quality assurance in programme review. For the writers to be more ready and able to write proposals, they need time, rewards and simpler tools and procedures.



## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that a Task Force be formed to define how the new UN-Habitat structure will identify areas of focus for upcoming project identification and formulation. This will support the process of defining alignment of the mechanism to the new structure. The HQPRC should be part of this process. A new task force can be drawn from the HQPRC, RPRCs and relevant divisions. In the interim, the sections of the template that refer to the focus areas should continue but with more emphasis placed on alignment with MTSIP and the work plans.

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that portfolio selection policy and procedures be identified to determine the best combination of projects in the different regions. This may mean hiring a portfolio consultant. It will also require that UN-Habitat identify multiple criteria from which they can develop quality assurance indicators and indicators for projects aligned to the two year work plan. These indicators will support portfolio selection. The process of identification of the new project portfolio should be collaborative. This means it should be inclusive of informal groups and communities living in the various countries where UN-Habitat works. Their participation can help identification of new projects. Emphasis should also be placed on replicating projects which have worked well in the past (whether funded by UN-Habitat or not).

Better resource management is also a factor for effective alignment. This means resource identification and allocation, so that the resources required for programme review are in line with work demands. UN-Habitat should identify government and development partners who identify themselves more with a results

focus than a delivery focus and approach. This will result in more strategizing together in the future. It will require a separate template to accommodate partners.

The availability of resources should be forecast and resource conflict needs to be resolved in advance. A bottom up approach to portfolio development is recommended as the regions are now more experienced in project formulation and may be best placed to identify potential projects and their resources, than senior management. At all times, the projects should be prioritized for funding so they are aligned with strategic priorities and also more realistic.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that information be better managed in line with the UN-Habitat knowledge management strategy and RBM principles. This means the PRC and others need to work closely with the divisions dealing with those areas.

Better information management will create:

- Better availability of information will enable divisions to deliver services, collaborate, manage themselves and trace processes and decisions;
- Better collection, synthesis, packaging and storage of information related to all aspects of UN-Habitat including those related to programme review, Restructuring information storage to enable easy access or sharing more effectively throughout UN-Habitat. UN-Habitat can consider the production of an alignment stream, whereby documentation can be disaggregated then later circulated to meet documentation needs of different parties, divisions and committees. Since it is re-structuring, this information can be helpful.

In order to strengthen the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat, it is recommended to develop more RBM-specific training tools. This means training/re-training should be conducted. A training needs assessment has to be carried out first. This will help identify which staff need training. The training content will depend on the purpose for which the RBM training will be used and at which stage of the project cycle management it will be applied.

Staff need explicit RBM training combined with support and mentoring from the PRCs. This will help them when developing indicators for the projects they formulate. It will give them the chance and time to learn from the results before they formulate proposals. Tools for programme review need to be tailored less for headquarters needs and more for regional needs. The PRCs also need to be more involved with key divisions such as the M & E Unit and others in how to best use the training. The roles of the divisions in programme review need to be clearly spelled out.

**Recommendation 4:** It is recommended that changes be made to the procedures and systems used for programme review. The two tier structure should be replaced with a single tier system directed at proposals not briefs. Greater delegation of authority to the regions is needed. The three page brief as set in the guide should be adhered to, but it does not need a template.

The Steering Committee should be revived if it can be more active. A better alternative is making the HQPRC and RPRCs stronger. The composition of the lead committee should change to reflect a balance of senior management and lower divisions. As much as possible membership should be vetted based on the need for members experienced in: i) Project proposal formulation; ii) Operational management; and, iii) technical skills. Each division should identify a focal person

who will liaise with the PRCs. This person should have writing, editing, quality assurance and technical skills.

The membership of the lead committee should rotate quarterly and members must read the documents and guidelines thoroughly before meetings. The Executive Director and most senior levels of management should be mainly to set a policy for quality assurance and RBM and give final approval of approved projects.

The regional representatives have improved their skills in project proposal formulation. Therefore it is time to re-evaluate the financial ceiling sets for project review so that the regions have more control of programme review. This can speed up the process and is also timely considering the rise in the cost of living and inflation from 2009, lowering the actual value of projects. The support the regional staff most appreciated was the guidance, leadership and mentoring of the Secretary. The Secretary must visit the regions on a regular basis. The Secretary position should be full time with staff support.

**Recommendation 5:** It is recommended that UN-Habitat develop its knowledge library to include reliable, up-to date databases of initial proposals and final proposals. This will facilitate general research, while at the same time enable comparison. A quality assurance committee should be created, with focal persons drawn from each division. Once the standards, criteria, etc., are defined for quality assurance, audit trails can be developed to record the results of checking procedures, including approved proposals.

Quality assurance can also be improved if there is regular evaluation of completed. The PRCs should be part of this process. More evaluation will mean UN-Habitat is better able to identify the outcomes and impact of the projects before

they start. At the same time, monitoring can establish whether or not the RBM components of the proposals were actually utilized as expected.

**Recommendation 6:** It is recommended that the checklist for reviewing proposals be converted into a quality assurance plan checklist. A well designed form for use in the meetings, inclusive of in-depth analysis of requirements against comments will also improve the process of proposal review beyond just comments by the reviewer. The formal review should be preceded by informal reviews. This can save time during the PRC meetings as the presenters will be very clear on what is expected.

As well as an improved shorter template for proposals, it is recommended that UN-Habitat develop computerized templates to support the writing of the proposals. After approval, the computerized processes can link staff to finance and other departments. This in turn, will speed up implementation on the ground. This step will increase the coherence of the funding process and how to take the next stages of project cycle management. In order to keep up the pace of change, every effort must be made to minimize the workload of those preparing proposals. The standardized proposal template also has to be computerized, linked to other divisions and available in several languages.

**Recommendation 7:** It is recommended that UN-Habitat take a stronger role (through the Program Office and the divisions) in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, and facilitating greater collaboration and institutional learning. Most important of all, the UN-Habitat Project Office should take charge of the change process stimulated by the strengthened programme review mechanism. This means exerting authority

on the divisions to receive training and formulate high quality proposals. The divisions have to take a strong role as focal persons involved in quality assurance, but also are ready to be part of the lead committee.

### Next Steps

One of the lessons from the evaluation is that people must be ready, willing and able to create and document project proposals. Some of the aspects of formulating proposals which contribute to resistance (by the proposal writers) are the complexity of the templates and time taken to write the proposals. It is recommended that in the restructuring process, UN-Habitat identifies means to remunerate or reward those who participate in the programme review meetings. This can motivate people.

If the task requirements for programme review are part of job descriptions, this can also help. As recommended, UN-Habitat should reduce the templates in size and omit the template for briefs. Instead, a request for a two page description of the concept can suffice.

The recommended 'one focal person per division' can speed up the process of change towards greater commitment to and more involvement in RBM, programme review principles and quality assurance. The recommendations should start with clarification on the new structure and how the previous focus area approach will be replaced, or modified. This means changes to the template, where there is reference to the focus areas, but also orientation of the PRCs leading the reviews. At the same time, UN-Habitat can inform its partners and the donors on the new approach.

# 1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

## 1.1 UN-HABITAT MANDATES

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has its origins in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, and the global Conference of United Nations on Human Settlements (UNCHS) held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976. It existed initially as the UNCHS carrying out technical activities from 1978-1996. In 1996, the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) adopted the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda. This gave UNCHS a new mandate to support and monitor the implementation of the Habitat Agenda as a fully-fledged programme (Resolution 56/206 of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2001).

The UN-Habitat mandate today derives from the outcome of the Habitat Agenda, the Millennium Declaration, the Declaration on Cities and other Human Settlements, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and specific mandates given by various Governing Council Resolutions. Within the United Nations, UN-Habitat is the lead agency for coordinating and monitoring the progress of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and reporting on significant improvements to the lives of slum dwellers. The two main goals of the Habitat Agenda are: (a) adequate shelter for all, and (b) sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. UN-Habitat also monitors the Johannesburg declaration on Sustainable Development by including water and sanitation among its mandated responsibilities.

## 1.2 UN-HABITAT MTSIP

The audit by the Office of the Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in 2005 recommended sharpening of the UN-Habitat focus in order to have greater impact.

To realize its goal for more sustainable focussed development, UN-Habitat developed the comprehensive Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) for the years 2008 to 2013. As endorsed in Governing Council Resolution 20/19, the strategic goal of MTSIP is "to support governments and their development partners to achieve more sustainable development". The intent of the plan was: (i) to sharpen the focus of the work of UN-Habitat and broaden its funding base; (ii) to strengthen programme alignment and coherence; and, (iii) to apply results-based management to enhance value for money, transparency and accountability (Resolution 21/2).

The overarching goal of MTSIP is "to ensure an effective contribution to sustainable urbanization". Its vision is to help "create by 2013 the necessary conditions for concerted international and national efforts to stabilize the growth of slums and to set the stage for subsequent reduction in a reversal of the number of slum dwellers". According to MTSIP, the successful achievement of this goal is dependent on institutional reform in UN-Habitat inclusive of formally adopting results-based management (RBM) as a management tool for achieving the MTSIP results. MTSIP includes five substantive

focus areas: (i) Advocacy, monitoring and partnerships; (ii) Participatory urban planning, management and governance; (iii) Pro-poor land and housing; (iv) Environmentally sound and affordable urban infrastructure and services; and (v) Strengthening human settlements finance systems.

A sixth focus area, Excellence in Management, has four components of which RBM is one. These components are: (i) The Enhanced Results-based Management including strengthened planning, monitoring, evaluation, improved accountability and results reporting; (ii) Human Resources Management and Administration to better align staff competencies with programme priorities, improved efficiency, transparency and delegation of authority; (iii) Resource Mobilization to consolidate and broaden the existing donor base and secure more predictable multi-year funding; and (iv) The Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework (ENOF) for country level activities. ENOF is expected to impact positively on programme cohesion and alignment and effectiveness of UN-Habitat support to member states.

In July 2007, the UN-Habitat Executive Director set milestones through the MTSIP Action Plan and established internal Task Forces to support the implementation of MTSIP. One of these was the RBM Task Force, which was a key strategic entity formed to improve management effectiveness, learning and accountability through integration of RBM in UN-Habitat. At a UN-Habitat Partners Meeting held in Seville, Spain, on October, 2008 to review 'Management Excellence for the Achievement of MTSIP 2008-2013', the RBM plan was also discussed. Discussions focused on how to institutionalize RBM principles at the divisional levels of UN-Habitat, This means

divisions which are responsible for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, internal management and reporting. The RBM Task Force designed a series of strategies to articulate RBM clearly (including the development of the PRC guidelines and tools) and foster a culture of results in UN-Habitat which were based on the mandate of RBM (Governing Council resolution 55/231). The RBM Task Force carried its tasks out during the Quick Win period and UN-Habitat divisions were then expected to take over. Using an RBM approach means that UN-Habitat would shift the focus of planning, budgeting, managing and monitoring, from how things are done in UN-Habitat to what results are accomplished.

### 1.3 THE STRENGTHENED PROGRAMME REVIEW MECHANISM

The framework of Results Based Management (RBM) was mandated at the Governing Council in 2007 (Resolution 55/231) to align the above six focal areas with the organizational structures charged then with implementing MTSIP in UN-Habitat (Annex V: Organizational Structure). For example, the sixth focal area "Excellence in Management" was to be institutionalized throughout UN-Habitat divisions. The specific area of 'strategic programme review' was to be implemented using RBM principles in a Programme Review Mechanism. The Secretariat Report (December 2009-December 2010) states that "the strengthening of the Programme Review Committee/mechanism in 2009 was a pivotal part of UN-Habitat's reforms. Indeed it was one of the strategic 'Quick Wins' for the kick-start phase of the MTSIP.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Secretariat Report (December 2009-September 2010) p.5. This is an internal report prepared by the Secretariat and other members of the HQPRC.

The programme review mechanism was based in the Programme Support Division (PSD) in the UN-Habitat Headquarters. The PSD forms part of the programmatic framework structures of UN-Habitat.<sup>6</sup> It is responsible for the financial, programme planning, administrative and human resource functions.<sup>7</sup> It managed the activities of the programme review mechanism during the period under evaluation. The mechanism was expected to address quality standards and oversight with respect to programme review. Prior to December 2009, the Programme Review Committee faced structural and operational inadequacies. Some of the challenges identified were: i) The mandate and authority for the mechanism were not clearly defined; ii) It was not anchored to any management structure, in turn leading to poor coordination of its functions; iii) The membership was too large and unstable, meaning it lacked the authority to institutionalize change;

iv) In UN-Habitat there was generally weak alignment between the programmes and projects reviewed, biennial work programme results and UN-Habitat mandates; v) There was poor internal collaboration and cooperation between the different units in UN-Habitat; and vi) The lessons learned and good practices identified in the field did not systematically inform programme formulation and implementation.

From December 2009, a reformed Programme Review Mechanism was introduced. It made structural changes as follows: Firstly, the Program Review Committees (HQPRC and Regional PRCs) were launched in December 2009. New and alternate PRC members with extensive subject matter experience were identified from the highest level of management and other divisions. The involvement of higher management was to ensure decisions in the committees had the required weight and authority. Secondly, to ensure that the project approval process was consistent for all projects and Divisions, (regardless of funding sources) UN-Habitat created new operational guidelines and templates. These served to rationalize the PRC structures and clearly define the roles and responsibilities for members within the management and governance structure, as well as to draw accountability lines.

To address the previous disconnect between the regions and headquarters, a dedicated PRC secretary (consultant) was contracted. She has been supporting the PRC operations on a full time basis since April 2010. The PRC Secretary was expected to link the headquarters structures to the regions, as well as being responsible for the coordination of the activities of the committees.

<sup>6</sup> *The UN-Habitat organizational structure (as of September 2011) is organized around four sub-programmes, which correspond to four substantive Divisions. These are: Shelter and Sustainable Human Settlements Development corresponding to the Global Division (GD); the Monitoring the Habitat Agenda corresponding to the Monitoring and Research Division (MRD); the Regional and Technical Cooperation corresponding to the Regional and Technical Corporation Division (RTCD); and the Human Settlements Financing – corresponding to the Human Settlements Financing Division (HSFD). In addition to the four sub-programmes, there are the Executive Direction and Management (EDM) and the Programme Support Division (PSD), which form part of programmatic framework structures for implementation of UN-Habitat mandate and objectives, Annex V: Organizational Structure.*

<sup>7</sup> *The Programme Support Division was also required to provide overall direction and guidance on the allocation and management of resources; take responsibility for UN-Habitat support services; liaise with the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) and represent UN-Habitat on administrative matters at major UN inter-agency meetings.*

In the new procedures, there was now a two-tier review process of programme/project formulation. This started with a review of a three-page project brief. At the next level, project proposals were reviewed. This procedure was expected to expedite the time taken for review of briefs and project proposals.

In order to strengthen the link across regions and at headquarters, virtual members of the HQPRC now participated in the review process. They worked closely with the RPRCs. The circulation of more explanatory minutes of PRC meetings amongst members is another of the strategies adopted to close the communication gaps across the regions. There were several reviews and retreats (held during the period of December 2009 to June 2011). These suggested that challenges still remained to be addressed in several areas, including: i) The PRC structure and governance; ii) The review process itself; and iii) The financial and PRC threshold for Directors.

The flow chart in Figure 1.1 shows the two tier approach. The use of the two stage tier process was intended to enable timely dialogue between divisions and branches, which was lacking before. This was expected to prevent duplication and enhance the quality of the formulated projects. According to the internal reports of the Secretariat for 2009-2010, the PRCs were able to speed up the pace of review by meeting twice monthly. This meant that the PRC was able to conduct a significant number of reviews of briefs and projects from the time of strengthening in December 2009 as indicated in tables 1.1 and 1.2. These twice monthly meetings reviewed documentation for design soundness and integrity as well as alignment with the UN-Habitat two year plans.

The external portfolio review conducted by Forrs and Ekons<sup>8</sup> for the same time period was studied by the evaluator. This study shows a total of 344 projects were managed by UN-Habitat (which presumably were reviewed). These were valued at USD769 million, apparently a higher financial value portfolio than in the past.

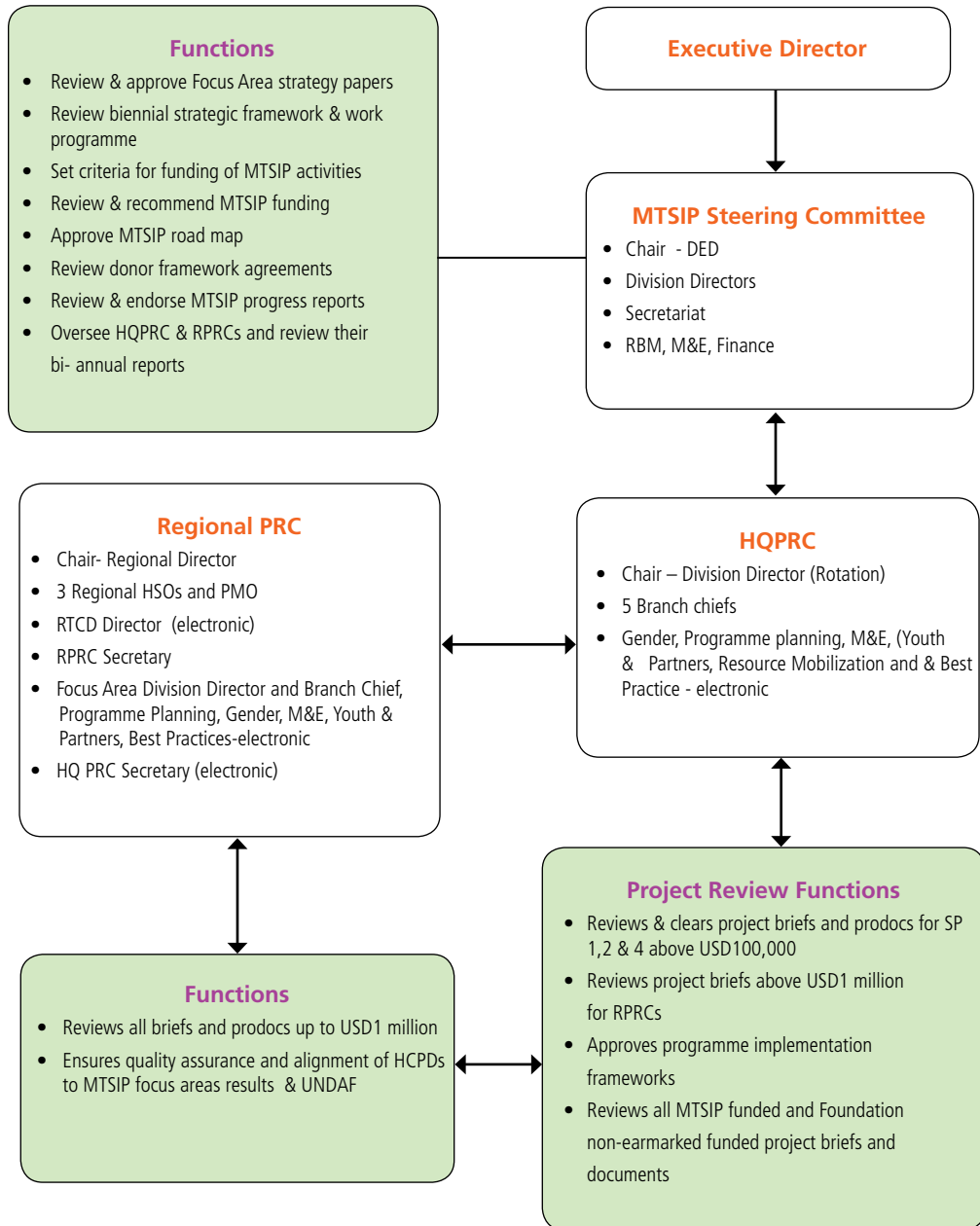
A study of the PRC minutes (for the period under evaluation) showed there were 56 briefs and projects reviewed by the PRC in 2011 at a value of USD204 million, again suggesting a rise from 2009<sup>9</sup>. In the Forrs and Ekons study 25% of the projects had a value of USD1 million or higher, whereas of the 56 documents reviewed in 2011, 77% had a value of USD1 million or higher. This also suggests increased portfolio size in terms of financial value.

At one level of the two tier approach, the Regional Programme Review Committees (RPRCs) received briefs from the regions. They were then required to develop clear project documents under standard templates and ensure there was alignment with the MTSIP focus areas results, the UNDAF process and quality assurance standards. These proposals were then submitted to the HQPRC. Twenty-six HQPRC meetings were held from December 2009 – December 2010 and 12 meetings held from January 2011– September 30, 2011. This confirms twice monthly meetings were held, as intended. Each RPRC was comprised of a minimum of six members drawn from regions comprising Regional Directors and an RPRC Secretary. At the headquarters level of the PRC, the Deputy Executive Director (DED) chaired the MTSIP Steering Committee.

<sup>8</sup> Kim Forrs, Ekons, Dr. "A Review of the Portfolio of projects and programmes in UN-Habitat as of December 2010", Final Report 6/6/2011.

<sup>9</sup> Data entered in MS Word was found to be incomplete and sometimes inconsistent. Five fields were not entered and currency was in EUROS in some cases.

**FIGURE 1.1:** Programme Review Mechanism Structure





**TABLE 1.1:** Projects reviewed by PRCs (December 2009-September 2010)

Description (Total Documents Reviewed 174)	Headquarters	ROAP	ROLAC	ROAAS
Total Number of Projects Approved According to Regions	55	28	10	17
Total Number of Briefs and Project Documents Reviewed	80	41	23	30
Number of Projects Rejected	0	0	0	0

**Source:** PRC Secretariat Report

**TABLE 1.2:** Projects Approved by Regional Offices December 2009 - September 2010

Regions	Below USD100,000	USD\$100,000 to USD500,000	USD500,001 to USD999,999	Over USD 1 million	Total
HQPRC	17	23	7	16	63
ROAAS	10	3	2	0	15
ROAP	9	8	4	0	24
ROLAC	1	4	1	1	7
ROEETC	1	0	0	0	1
Overall Total	38	38	14	20	110

**Source:** PRC Secretariat Report

The PRC was chaired by a Division Director at D2 level in meetings twice a month. The Division Director was supported by members from the branches (one from each of five focus areas) supported by the Secretary amongst others, to make a total of twelve members (Annex VII: Programme Review Mechanism). The HQPRC Secretary position (Annex VI: HQ Terms of Reference) was expected to be the "back bone" of the whole review mechanism. This means a coordinator and participant in all the headquarter review structures and the repository of all project-related information going from RPRC and HQPRC to the MTSIP Steering Committee and vice versa. However, the Secretary was not a member of the Steering Committee except by invitation.

As the coordinator and key intelligence repository between the PRCs and the MTSIP, the PRC Secretary played the lead role of ensuring quality adherence and compliance of documents to the highest standard. These documents were then submitted to the HQPRC for final review. The extensive tasks for the Secretary position covered coordination of all PRC activities to ensure effectiveness, i.e. the review of all documentation and participation in all meetings, and preparation of analytical reports, to name a few tasks. Among the first activities of the Strengthened PRC were a series of training sessions on results-based management (RBM) and project cycle management. It is clear from documentation that some training was carried

out for 362 persons (from 2009 to 2012). These sessions were then followed by the twice monthly meetings in which briefs and project documents were reviewed.

The PRC and other divisions of UN-Habitat met in a retreat and several meetings, held in March, April and June 2011 to assess the progress of the strengthened PRC. The participants in the meetings made many suggestions for policy review. The recommendations were for a more clearly defined mandate for the PRC in term of financial ceilings and the type of projects the PRC would review. Procedural changes for the HQPRC leadership were also recommended so that an alternate leader would always be in place if the chairperson was not there. This was to ensure more consistent leadership in the twice monthly meetings. A 2009 external review of the UN-Habitat projects entitled 'Assessment of Alignment of Project Documents to MTSIP' was conducted by Mbiba, Beacon.<sup>10</sup> His report cited a low proportion of project documents being aligned to the MTSIP at that time. It is noted that this was the time period prior to the strengthening of the programme review mechanism. For example, the Mbiba study of 2008 - 2009 documents found that 17% of 2008 documents and 31% of 2009 documents were well aligned to MTSIP. It is noted that the Mbiba study examined all UN-Habitat documentation, not only project documents. However, the

results are still significant as they show there was less alignment prior to the strengthening of the review mechanism. After the reform of the PRC, the degree of alignment rose to 95%. The results of the Mbiba study are significant for the purpose of evaluation of the mechanism as they suggest that the strengthened mechanism was a major step towards better alignment. The Mbiba study also stressed the need to streamline review requirements where there are multiple donors.

An August 2010 Peer Review of the implementation of MTSIP makes reference to the improved operationalization of the mechanism. This was attributed to mandatory procedures and having a designated consultant Secretary in place. According to the Peer Review report, there still remained gaps in timely decision making and there was still need for more delegation of roles from the HQPRC to the regions. An internal report prepared by the Secretary to the HQPRC, "The Secretariat Report" provides a progress report for the period December 2009 - December 2010. This report found there was greater engagement of expert staff in the review process and greater cross learning. This meant more internal collaboration had occurred in terms of technical support to programme review in the first year.

Many obstacles remained by late 2010 in terms of managing knowledge and creating accurate and consistent databases, to name a few areas mentioned in the Secretariat Report. The Forrs and Ekons external review<sup>11</sup> of the portfolio of project and programmes of UN-Habitat also refers to non-reliability of databases in UN-Habitat. The audit of UN-Habitat by the

<sup>10</sup> *Self-Assessment Report of the PRC Retreat of 3rd to 4th March 2011. A retreat was held to make policy recommendations to the UN-Habitat senior management. The recommendations were on the PRC structure, review process issues, financial and PRC threshold, review procedures/categories, policy guidelines and knowledge management. This retreat was then followed up on April 1st, 2011 with a review meeting in April 2011, to address the retreat recommendations, mostly addressed other than knowledge management. Another meeting was held on June 28th 2011 to endorse the recommendations and forward them to the Executive Director.*

<sup>11</sup> *The report by Forrs and Ekons (6/6/2011) "A review of the portfolio of projects and programmes in UN-Habitat as of December 2010" referred to 344 projects managed by UN-Habitat by December 2010, but states that the database is not 100% accurate.*

OIOS (September 2010) makes reference to the improved effectiveness of the PRC in its role of ensuring project compliance with the MTSIP. The audit also refers to the positive role of the PRC in guiding senior management during proposal review towards timely response by the PRC members. The OIOS recommended consolidation and centralizing of strategic functions, such as those performed by the PRC, in order to ensure that all processes and services would better contribute to the achievement of RBM in UN-Habitat. After the conclusion of this evaluation exercise, UN-Habitat implemented new measures to the Programme Review Mechanism.<sup>12</sup>

## 1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report has five chapters. Chapter 1 on Introduction and context describes the background and context of the intervention, 'A Strengthened Programme Review Mechanism in UN-Habitat December 2009 - September 2011'. Chapter 2 describes the approach and methodology used by the evaluator<sup>13</sup>. Chapter 3 comprises the evaluation findings with an assessment and analysis of the subject matter against evaluation criteria. In Chapter 4, contains conclusions. Chapter 5 provides lessons learned, recommendations and next steps.

<sup>12</sup> In an ongoing process of restructuring from September 2011, UN-Habitat has created a new organizational structure replacing the HQPRC with a Programme Advisory Group (PAG) anchored to senior level management through the Project Office. The PAG now meets weekly and there is a stronger management and operational role for the PRC Secretary (Annex VI: HQPRC Secretary Terms of Reference).

<sup>13</sup> This chapter describes the evaluation design and justification of the methodology used to determine the findings of this report. It also presents data collection and analysis methods used in the evaluation plan (Annex II: Revised Evaluation Work Plan), as well as the evaluation criteria and the questions asked. The bibliography lists the global references used by the evaluator to justify findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this report. These documents are shown in Annex III: Bibliography, and represent reliable global guides used by evaluators. They include the UN-Habitat Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (2003) based on standards set by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the United Nations Development Group Results-Based Management Handbook (2010), the UN-Habitat Project cycle Management Guide (2003), CIDA Results-Management Guide (2010), and the UNDP Results Management Guide (2003). Definitions used by the evaluator for the criteria rely on UNEG and other experts.

## 2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The purpose of the evaluation (as stated in the TOR) was to study the reforms undertaken by UN-Habitat to address the challenges identified in the PRC review and to promote a more effective results-based system of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the period of December 2009 - September 2011 (Annex I: Terms of Reference).

The study was also expected to assess the programme review mechanism to understand if there was continued consistent focus on the achievement of MTSIP results, as well as programmatic alignment, inter/intra-branch and division consultation and collaboration and coherence. The findings of this evaluation, carried out by an external evaluator, Ms. Kathleen Webb, from 6 February 2012 - 9 April 2012, are the subject of this report.

The findings are expected to assess the extent to which the reformed Programme Review Mechanism (its structures, processes and tools) addressed previously identified challenges in the period December 2009 – September 2011. Lessons learned from the evaluation are expected to inform the future direction of the Programme Review Mechanism, the HQPRC (now called the PAG), and the three Regional PRCs.

It makes recommendations and suggests revisions aimed at ensuring continuous improvement of organization-wide efficiency and effectiveness in the area of programme review.<sup>14</sup>

### 2.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

The evaluation framework was based on global evaluation criteria as defined by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG): Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. As the evaluation was directed at an organizational mechanism, not a project, the term '*relevance*' is defined beyond standard definition<sup>15</sup> to include the acceptance and embedding of the mechanism/PRC in its environment (UN-Habitat) within the context of RBM. The assumption is made (although not stated in UN-Habitat documentation), that '*direct beneficiaries*' are the presenters of the briefs and proposals, while '*indirect beneficiaries*' are the stated beneficiaries in the approved development projects.

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<sup>14</sup> The recommendations of this report are also expected to inform decisions of senior management on the future direction of the programme review mechanism and the format of its programme/project review processes.

<sup>15</sup> 'Relevance' is defined in the UN-Habitat Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (2003) for assessment of relevance in development interventions: "the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.

*Effectiveness*<sup>16</sup> in this case refers to the standard definition of the criterion<sup>16</sup> applied to the extent to which the PRC and RPRCs were able to meet planned results, i.e. goals, purposes and outputs and also contribute to expected MTSIP outcomes. The UN-Habitat staff associated with the PRC mechanism was not responsible for monitoring or evaluating the projects they approved. Therefore it was not possible to assess the degree to which the objectives of approved projects were met over the life of the project.

This report examines effectiveness within the context of its global definition and the principles of RBM. The evaluator could not compare first and finalized proposals to see degree of improvement (as these documents had not been synthesized or entered in a spreadsheet-type database for ease of use). Instead the evaluator did a random sample of approved proposals to assess their quality.

*Efficiency* is defined as the utilization and usability of resources or inputs/staff, in relation to the expected outputs. In this case, outputs refer to project proposals aligned to the MTSIP, to the expected standards and on a timely basis. In addition, efficiency also examines the 'usability and applicability'<sup>17</sup> of the tools which form the foundation for the procedures of the mechanism. Finally, efficiency refers to the extent to which the present services provided by the strengthened PRC met the needs of

direct beneficiaries/user groups (the designers, formulators and presenters of the briefs and projects). This meant their 'satisfaction' level was identified as a reliable measure of efficiency as satisfaction would factor into their willingness and ability to formulate proposals to the expected standard and within the context of RBM.

*'Sustainability'* and *'Impact'* refer to the continuity or probability that UN-Habitat is capable to continue (sustain) its core activities (funding development projects) within the context of an RBM approach under the PRCs<sup>18</sup>.

In line with the purpose stated in the TOR, the evaluation design selected was justified for an evaluation of an ongoing project. The evaluation criteria were applied to mechanism to understand its performance. The evaluation findings, lessons learned and recommendations then support the response to the six questions as stated in the TOR with key findings and conclusions.

The questions are:

1. To what extent has the Programme Review Mechanism supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat?
2. How has the Programme Review Mechanism been effective in providing quality assurance of projects and as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals?

<sup>16</sup> *The UN-Habitat Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (June 2003) defines effectiveness as the measure of the merit or worth of an activity, e.g. the extent to which a programme achieves its planned results, i.e. goals, purposes and outputs and contributes to outcomes.*

<sup>17</sup> *'Usability' is whether the contents are relevant and at the right level for the reader. 'Applicability' refers to the degree to which the contents help the reader apply the materials and train others how to use the materials. (Folmer, H.R.)*

<sup>18</sup> *The evaluator relied on global standards for evaluating organizational capability as defined by UNEG, SIDA and others such as MDF.*

3. To what extent, and how has the Programme Review Mechanism led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects?<sup>19</sup>
4. How successful has the Programme Review Mechanism been in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, in facilitating collaboration across organizational units and contributing to institutional learning?
5. What are the lessons learned from the experience of the Programme Review Mechanism, for example, related to project quality assurance, project approval, the organizational structure of the Programme Review Mechanism, and effective budget thresholds for PRC reviews?
6. What are the main recommendations for an effective project review system in UN-Habitat?

## 2.3 METHODOLOGY

The evaluator utilized three methods of data collection. These are described in the approved evaluation work plan (Annex II: Revised Evaluation Workplan). The methodology enabled comparisons of informative data with results of interviews and email questionnaires against global evaluation criteria and concepts and then against the evaluation questions.

The assessment of the results against the criteria produced results on which the key findings were developed in response to the evaluation questions. The three evaluation methods used

for assessment and analysis of results were:

(i) Literature and document review was conducted on the initial documents provided to the evaluator, involving review of submitted project proposals. A total of 52 documents were studied, including 18 project documents (Annex IV: Bibliography).

(ii) Key informant interviews with Steering Committee members, PRC members and regional members were conducted. This included a conference call to ROLAC.

As well as current and members and former members of the PRC Committee, PRCs, Presenters, the evaluator interviewed staff from the Gender Unit, Information Services Section and Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.

A total of 43 persons participated of which 23 interviewed face to face and 20 were responded to the 65 confidential email questionnaires sent out. The combined total of persons combined interviewed face to face and those interviewed via email, are analyzed with respect to the evaluation criteria used by the evaluator (Annex V: List of Persons Interviewed).

Email responses were received from persons working for ROAAS, ROLAC, ROAP and others identified by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.

(iii) Attending a PRC Meeting The evaluator attended one PRC/PAG meeting at UN-Habitat, on 23 February 2012 where presenters and PRC members discussed briefs and project proposals.

<sup>19</sup> The evaluator was expected to sample project briefs and documents with a budget below USD100,000 reviewed by division directors and those under USD1 million reviewed by the regional PRCs to determine the quality of the review process; and quality of approved project briefs and documents, including use of logical framework and indicators of achievement.

A total of eight persons were present in the meeting. This provided an opportunity for the evaluator to understand the procedures, group dynamics, PRC management style and quality of the briefs and proposals submitted.

## 2.4 EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

The evaluator faced some limitations with respect to the evaluation exercise. These were mainly related to literature and documentation review, such as non-availability of reliable documentation for comparative studies of initial proposals against finalized ones. These proposals had not been archived for precise reliable analysis. As such, the evaluator was not able to carry out comparative studies, as set in the evaluation work plan.

In the comparative study approach, an evaluator can compare first proposal submissions with finalized ones. Differences would be noted to reflect the mentoring, advice and comments received from the PRC. The results would determine changes, if any, in terms of quality, attributed to the input of the PRC. Instead of a comparative analysis of first submission reports against finalized ones, the evaluator sampled 18 finalized project documents. These were representative of a wide range of presentations to the PRCs. They were studied them in terms of substantive content against the project formulation template.

A second limitation was the lack of reliable databases for the PRC activities in general. There was summary information gathered from December 2009 to December 2010 which was synthesized and analyzed by the Secretary. However, it was not well compiled or entered in a database.

Beyond the December 2010 time period, important aspects related to the project (such as number of projects reviewed by the PRC and RPRCs, the value of approved projects, value by sub-programme, and percentage of alignment) were not gathered. In the absence of up to date quantitative data, the evaluator placed more reliance on qualitative assessment mainly through key informant interviews with Steering Committee members, PRC members and presenters.

The evaluator was not able to visit the Regional Offices to conduct regional evaluations on site, due to commitments of those offices during the evaluation period, although a conference call was held with the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and the evaluator met with the Chairperson of the RPRC for the Regional Office for African and Arab States (ROAAS). Despite the above limitations, the evaluator was able to carry out the assignment with facilitation from UN-Habitat. The assessment and analysis of the performance of the mechanism are shown as evaluation findings followed by key findings and conclusions on the evaluation questions.

## 2.5 MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was carried out by an external evaluator, Ms. Kathleen Linda Webb, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, in close consultation with UN-Habitat. The Program Support Division (PSD) was responsible for managing and coordinating the evaluation. The Secretary supported the evaluator on substantive matters. The evaluation was guided by the United Nations Evaluation Group's standards for evaluation.

### 3. EVALUATION FINDINGS: ASSESSMENT OF THE STRENGTHENED MECHANISM PERFORMANCE AGAINST EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### 3.1 EVALUATION FINDINGS ON RELEVANCE

This sub-chapter comprises findings of the evaluation drawn from respondent interviews and documentation study<sup>20</sup>. The findings of the evaluation indicate that the programme review process is highly relevant to both country needs and global priorities as stated in the MTSIP 2008-2013. The six focus areas (which were central to project formulation), were relevant to the needs and priorities of the regional offices.

The design of the template for project formulation was found to be less applicable by the respondents over time, as it was more easily applied to development projects, not to internal work programmes and multi-donor projects. The respondents found that more and more often the briefs were no longer the short three page document as stated in the guide. Instead briefs had evolved into proposals in terms of template complexity and length. This meant that both briefs and proposals had become over-complex.

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<sup>20</sup> 'Relevance' is defined in the UN-Habitat Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (2003) for assessment of relevance in development interventions: "the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with country needs global priorities and partners' and donors' policies. The question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of a program or project or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances". As the mechanism is not a development intervention, the evaluator also refers to 'Legitimacy' or acceptance and imbedding of the mechanism in UN-Habitat and 'Suitability' of using a PRC mechanism to carry out the project reviews.

The requirement that all project documents (including multi-donor projects) be subject to the UN-Habitat formulation document meant the regions had to rewrite the entire document after approval by the PRCs. In this respect, the mechanism was less relevant to some of the partners' policies.<sup>21</sup>

The evaluator finds that documentation, which ultimately guides project management, must fit UN-Habitat mandates and the MTSIP work plans, so simplification of the UN-Habitat template is a better solution than using several templates from other organizations.

The PRC was supposed to bring coherence between the MTSIP, work programme and projects. The templates certainly do this as they refer to the focus areas or results, something which may be absent from other donors' formats. The financial procedures were intended to decentralize the approval process and allow RPRCs to approve projects with lower financial ceilings. This meant projects with a value of USD100,000 or above, and all regional projects above USD1 million had to be submitted to the HQPRC.

The respondents from the regions found this regulation to be less relevant over time as the cost factor and inflation had actually decreased the financial value of most projects. The respondents found that the two-tier approach

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<sup>21</sup> An example of another format is the GEF project formulation document which has a shorter and simpler template for proposals. It does not require a template for briefs.



created a bottleneck (despite being seen as an improvement when strengthening first occurred). It required them to submit increasingly detailed briefs first, followed by very detailed project documents. Both of these were time consuming. It meant that the staff from regions which were not English speaking had to find experts to write the reports in English so that the HQPRC could read them.

The regions wanted greater decentralization and rising of the financial ceilings so that regions had more control over the project documents. They preferred more virtual support by headquarters and greater reliance on regional experts, who they felt knew more about the countries as they lived in them. There was also concern that the regions were not very involved in the initial design of the guide for the mechanism. Another concern was that the formulation checklist needed to be subjected to more extensive testing to be more relevant.

The evaluator notes that the project proposals reviewed by the PRC (from December 2009 to September 2011) fit high standards of quality expected in project design. They were well aligned to the five focal areas of the MTSIP in that the stated projects goals and expected results fell into one or more of the Focal areas.

This makes them highly relevant to the strategic goal of MTSIP set by UN-Habitat, "to support governments and their development partners to achieve more sustainable urbanization". A study by Mbiba, B. (December 2009) brings out the importance of alignment to development. This means that their objectives, activities, expected outputs and outcomes had the potential to make a cumulative contribution to the MTSIP result areas and development in general.

This study seems to imply that the status of project formulation was satisfactory prior to December 2009, in terms of alignment to MTSIP but it improved. By 2011, up to 95% of projects approved were aligned to the MTSIP. Mbiba was not specifically looking at brief and proposal formulation, but projects in general. When his findings are considered alongside comments of the respondents to this evaluation, it is clear that the strengthened mechanism has continued to increase quality assurance and promoted better selection of resources for strategic priorities as stated in MTSIP.

As the focus of the evaluation is on the mechanism, the PRCs and the tools, it is noted that the project template makes adequate reference in its overview to MTSIP, the MDGs and the UN-Habitat. This is evidence that the mechanism supports alignment with the work programme and MTSIP. A study of the project formulation chapters of the sampled proposal documents shows a pattern of reference to the MTSIP in the overview, but to a lesser extent in other sections of the proposals. There was greater reference to the work programme in the sampled proposals than to MTSIP. Therefore the evaluator concludes that to some extent the mechanism did support alignment to MTSIP and the work programme.

The evaluator finds that the expected MTSIP results for implementing RBM in UN-Habitat did not go far enough in articulating and later moving towards better partnering in UN-Habitat divisions in order to implement RBM throughout the organization. This means divisions working together more than working in 'silos'. This was not always the case and many Divisions still work in 'silos'.

The MTSIP expected results for RBM, were broadly stated as "establishing policy, creating guidelines and implementing monitoring, drawing lessons."<sup>22</sup> This has taken place on a limited scale. The evaluator finds that policy is more the responsibility of UN-Habitat as a whole, not the PRCs. RBM was to be implemented along with knowledge management and this did not take place. This is not a shortcoming of the divisions of UN-Habitat charged with implementing the mechanism after the RBM Task Force completed its task. Rather, it is an observation with respect to embedment of RBM in general in UN-Habitat.

The strengthened mechanism went far in terms of project formulation, a critical component of project planning and design. This means that the relevant approach was taken to ensure there were SMART objectives and clearly stated results. However, the PRC role ends when the projects are approved. The project cycle activities which follow the approval of project proposals by the PRC (namely funding, implementation and evaluation) are completely out of the control of the PRC.

The evaluator finds that if the RBM Task Force or MTSIP Steering Committee (or another body within UN-Habitat) had gone further to embed RBM beyond early planning, this would have contributed more to RBM embedment in UN-Habitat. Culture change would also have moved faster. There is some evidence of a team-based approach to RBM. There was RBM training facilitated mainly by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.

Records indicate that 362 persons received some RBM training (by June 2012). Of this total, 79 % of the trainees were trained before 2011. It also is noted that the training reached major divisions of UN-Habitat<sup>23</sup>.

The evaluator notes that an RBM-Knowledge Management Task Force was in place in 2008. It produced the MTSIP Results Framework and the institutional plan, but made no further reports to reflect inception and implementation steps planned. Apparently all units do their own planning, monitoring and reporting and carry out self-evaluations. There is still need for a stronger team based approach to RBM in UN-Habitat beyond the project formulation stage handled by the PRC. Similar views are made by donors such as CIDA with respect to integration of RBM using a team based approach, "The importance of ongoing team based approaches is critical so that an RBM management approach is in place in all divisions".<sup>24</sup>

The RBM Task Force was apparently expected to work only during the quick start phase i.e. up to 2008. The concept of RBM is not extensively stated in the documents related to the mechanism, although it is implied. These documents are: the guide, the project formulation checklist, the brief template and the proposal template. The guide makes no mention of RBM other than on page 2 of the guide and in an annex. The project formulation checklist makes no mention at all of RBM.

<sup>22</sup> UN resolution 21/2, p. 30.

<sup>23</sup> At least from 2011-2012, the records for 109 persons trained indicate they were from GD, HSF, MRD, OED, PSD, RTCD and SM.

<sup>24</sup> CIDA, Results Based Management Manual, p.2.

The templates have excellent sections containing the three mandatory components for RBM at project formulation stage: namely the logic model, performance management framework and risk register. The evaluator found these to be well designed and the risk register went beyond the quality expectations of the UNDG model with its sections on partner operational risk, financial risk, development risk and reputation risk. These can go far in ensuring projects are completed as planned. The evaluator notes that there remains a lot of discrepancy between terminologies<sup>25</sup> in the proposal guidelines (guide, templates). There is also no glossary or explanation of terms. This means there is risk of them being misinterpreted by those using them, especially if they are not familiar with RBM.

A scrutiny of the tools shows a lack of mention of the word 'RBM' in the body of the guidelines, the checklist and the template. This means the reader may not be able to link the body of the proposals (especially sections on management and monitoring) to the RBM components. As it stands the tools do not articulate and promote RBM enough to promote an RBM culture. As stated in the UNDP Handbook on RBM (2009), *"it is important that people understand and appreciate why they are doing the things the way they are doing to adopt an RBM approach in their general behavior and work"*.

The guide and template do not consistently provide helpful guidance to those preparing project proposals. The evaluator also notes that two key documents one would expect proposal writers to utilize, namely the UN-Habitat M&E guide (2003) and Project Cycle Management guide (2003), do not elaborate on

<sup>25</sup> Note. Here, the evaluator is not referring to terminologies of UN-Habitat, which all staff would know, but rather to terminologies related to RBM.

RBM at all. When RBM was adopted as a method for implementing the MTSIP in 2007, there was need to revise and update these key documents.

### 3.2 EVALUATION FINDINGS ON EFFECTIVENESS

This section presents findings on effectiveness<sup>26</sup> based on interviews and study of documentation.

The findings are placed within the context of best practices with respect to '*effectiveness*' and principles of RBM. The evaluator finds the performance of the strengthened mechanism with respect to this criterion, was 'Satisfactory' as overall, the positive aspects/ attributes far outweigh the challenges. Also the possibilities related to RBM embedment, still have one year to go, so events are still in the process of change in terms of effectiveness.

'*Effectiveness*' in this case refers to the standard definition of the criterion applied to the extent to which the Programme Review Mechanism (through the Steering Committee, HQPRC and three RPRCs) was able to facilitate the production of written project proposals. These proposals were expected to contribute to the MTSIP Focus Areas. This means the stated goals, objectives and outputs had to be aligned to the focal areas.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The UN-Habitat Monitoring and Evaluation Guide (June 2003) defines effectiveness as the measure of the merit or worth of an activity, e.g. the extent to which a programme achieves its planned results, i.e. goals, purposes and outputs and contributes to outcomes.

<sup>27</sup> During the period of evaluation, MTSIP outcomes were realized through five focus areas. All proposals were expected to be aligned with them. These were: Focus Area 1: Effective advocacy, monitoring and partnerships for sustainable urbanization; Focus Area 2: Participatory planning, management and governance; Focus Area 3: Access to land and housing for all; Focus Area 4: Environmentally sound basic urban infrastructure and services; Focus Area 5: Strengthening human settlements finance system.

The performance of the UN-Habitat mechanism with respect to effectiveness was 'Satisfactory' during the period of evaluation. This is because the development of the tools has the potential to make a significant contribution towards embedding RBM in the UN-Habitat planning process which is expected to be concluded by 2013).

Secondly, the creation of RBM working tools within the project proposals (logic model, performance management framework and risk register) mean that practitioners and partners are more likely to achieve the expected outcomes if they use them.

The managers are also more likely to implement projects using performance measurement procedures as they are generally well explained. If the working tools are utilized throughout the life of the individual projects, there is a greater likelihood of achievement of development results. This means there will be a sustained improvement in the lives of indirect beneficiaries in individual projects.

This is likely in any developing country where the proposal logical frameworks are used as management tools. This view is in line with other donors' guides such as the UNDG and CIDA RBM guides. The PRC and RPRCs were responsible for setting and managing the two per month meetings, which focused on a review of submitted briefs and proposals.

The various procedures and requirements showed the mechanism was concerned with quality assurance, and making sure 'good management by results' was well incorporated in the proposals. A review of the minutes of the meetings shows that due care was taken to enable the presenters to benefit from expert input on technical issues

(including virtual support). This supported the process of revision necessary before approval by the review committees.

Although there was some resistance to the template complexity, for the most part, the feedback from the committee(s) and virtual experts was appreciated. This was because the feedback ensured that projects were linked practically with the MTSIP work programme. The comments and recommendations were in-depth and in most cases, the presenters found them to be highly useful.<sup>28</sup> The quantitative results developed by the PRC Secretariat for 2010, indicated that project approval was expedited (Annex VII: Programme Review Committee Effectiveness Tables).

A total of 110 project proposals were reviewed in the period up to December 2010. These were all approved between December 2009 and September 2010. Of this total, 50% (55) were headquarters level projects; 25% (28) were from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP); 9% from the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC); and 15% from the Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States (ROAAS). This indicates that all three regions worked closely with the PRCs.

The HQPRC Meeting minutes were an important source of information for the evaluator. They confirmed the procedures used. The minutes were not synthesized or presented in spreadsheet or tabular form. This meant the evaluator was not able to conduct in-depth analysis on the number and value of the 2011 projects. However, a study

<sup>28</sup> *The presenters had concerns over the language of the documents (English) which did not apply to the languages of the countries in all cases. An additional concern was conforming to the UN-Habitat template when other donors were funding and required adherence to their own template.*

of the 2011 list of presentations (documented in the PRC Minutes file) showed there were 73 presentations to the HQPRC from January 2011 to December 31, 2011. Of these, 35 were briefs and 38 were project proposals. This suggests that the number of submissions declined for unspecified reasons.

The evaluator finds that the strengthening of the mechanism enabled it to contribute more effectively towards embedment of RBM in the planning process. This means the mechanism made a significant contribution to the processes of project identification and design, and formulation (appraisal and approval).<sup>29</sup> There was less contribution to embedment of RBM in the planning process alongside knowledge management as expected and as stated in MTSIP. The two units concerned (PSD and Knowledge Management) did not collaborate enough with each other.

UN-Habitat did not develop a medium term plan for the RBM Task Force (or another body) beyond the development of the guideline and tools. This is attributed to the RBM Task Force working only in the quick start phase and its activities taken over by the divisions using MTSIP roadmap. UN-Habitat did not anticipate the effort needed to create a 'culture of RBM'. At the same time, it did not extensively pilot the tools to ensure they were understandable. There was also no setting up of modalities to work with the units handling knowledge management. This has reduced the effectiveness of the strengthened mechanism.

In Table 3.1, the evaluator presents perceived positive perceptions of the strengthened review mechanism. The table below shows that the positive attributes of the mechanism have not deteriorated—indicating that the intended 'culture of RBM' is slowly being developed in UN-Habitat.

The evaluator finds that there was a significant degree of improvement in the preparation of comprehensive proposals developed in 2011, when compared to those of 2010. An assessment done by the evaluator on a sample of 18 sampled briefs and project documents (Annex IV: Bibliography) measured the degree of integration of results-based management. The selection was purposeful to include only development documents, not briefs or projects related to operations.

The evaluator developed a tool (Table 3.3) based on two global sources for RBM, namely (i) The United Nations Development Group Results-Based Management Handbook; and (ii) CIDA Results-Based Management.

Table 3.3 provides a summary of assessments by the evaluator of documents sampled for analysis. The evaluator rated the proposals against the three dimensions of RBM namely (i) The Logic Model/Results Matrix; (ii) Performance Measurement Framework/ Evaluation Plan; and (iii) Risk Register/Risk Management Strategy Framework.

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<sup>29</sup> *UN-Habitat Project Cycle Management Manual* (2003) p.5.

**TABLE 3.1:** Perceptions on the Strengthening of the PRC Mechanism

<b>Focus of the Strengthened PRC Mechanism (December 2009- March 2011)</b>	<b>Perception of Interviewees and Questionnaire Respondents (Evaluation Interviews 20122)</b>	<b>Evaluator's comments</b>
1. PRC is more results-oriented.	80% of those interviewed agreed that the PRC is more results-oriented as reflected in the quality of the input from PRC members and the improved components of the project documents (esp. Log frame). 10% found that the PRC was not as result-oriented as it should be and that there still lacked clarity amongst many on what RBM was and RBM best practices(10% no comment)	A comparison of the comments from the PRC members and alternates provides evidence of greater emphasis by the members on results-oriented briefs and project proposals. Being results-oriented as a virtual member was also apparent as the evaluator interviewed persons who served as members, alternates and virtual members.
2. Quality of PRC discussions more relevant. PRC members spending more time producing quality comments. Expert members providing more valuable inputs to reports (latest thinking).	100% of those interviewed agreed that the quality of discussions had improved significantly, although reasons varied: the expertise of the chair and co-chair and competence of the members, especially the virtual members contributed to better informed discussions which were more argumentative in the past. More experts at regional and national levels were needed. Where members appoint their staff to do presentations, this limits the quality of the discussions, as appointees often had no time to read the documents in depth, or were not aware of the best practices for a given sector.	The evaluator noted from the interviews compared with the minutes that the quality of discussions was relevant to the content of the documents and MTSIP, although there was less evidence of latest thinking as best practices had not yet been systematically catalogued, documented and circulated. A comparison of PRC member participation 2009-2010 showed that none of the 8 substantive members had attended all 26 PRC meetings; in fact attendance ranged from 1-10 meetings attended. Alternate members attended more meetings, ranging from 1-19 meetings. Information on virtual members was incomplete, but one person had participated in 17 of the 26 PRCs.
3. Briefs and Project documents are higher quality.	All respondents agreed that the quality of briefs and project documents had improved and this could be attributed directly to the PRCs. It was agreed that the quality could be further improved if approval methods were streamlined when multiple donors were involved.	The evaluator agrees that the quality in terms of content of the briefs and project documents is high, evidenced in their close linkage to the project cycle as reflected in global models such as the UNDP project cycle management standard. The evaluator was not provided with earlier briefs and project documents to enable an in-depth comparison, but those interviewed confirmed a higher quality
4. RBM and PCM training provided to some UN-Habitat staff.	Of those interviewed, only 10% had received training on this, apparently facilitated by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, through an unspecified model. Not knowing the models for RBM and project cycle management meant many presenters and those preparing briefs and documents or carrying out projects, were unclear in all cases of what to do.	The evaluator finds that this training was necessary and should have been carried out for all members and for key UN-Habitat staff. The lack of regular and systematic RBM and project cycle management training using a UN-Habitat designed model has contributed to staff not knowing standards for RBM and project cycle management

**TABLE 3.1:** Perceptions on the Strengthening of the PRC Mechanism

Focus of the Strengthened PRC Mechanism (December 2009- March 2011)	Perception of Interviewees and Questionnaire Respondents (Evaluation Interviews 2012)	Evaluator's comments
5. Collaboration between divisions and unit increased.	All those interviewed agreed that there is increased collaboration between divisions and units which has contributed to the design of high quality projects, then successfully implemented in the regions. However, the collaboration has far to go as divisions remain protective of their own mandates, budgets and time.	This may be due to the UN-Habitat design where each division and unit remains unique and working within their own budgets. The strategy papers on each of the focal areas presents the MTSIP in a way that each division and unit can understand and collaborate with other divisions. This takes time.
6. Increased participation and inclusiveness of internal stakeholders and experts at project design stage.	Interviewees and respondents agreed that internal stakeholders contribute more to the process and participate more in design stages in the various regions. Inclusiveness is not as high as the national and regional experts are not given enough credit for their expertise. Best practices gathered at regional and headquarters level need to be documented and shared more. The regions felt they were better placed to design their proposals than the headquarters were and 50% wanted brief only to go through the HQPRCs.	The evaluator notes that the expressed resistance was largely due to differences at regional levels as well as language gaps and RBM and project cycle management knowledge gaps. The other donors were not considered to the degree expected with respect to project design and should have been. A fora and guidelines for meeting and collaborating with other donors should have been drawn.
7. Decisions at project design level have the support needed to complete project documents.	All the respondents disagreed on this earlier finding, as more and more, projects were funded by multiple donors and rigidity by the PRC (that presenters use only the PRC format) meant further delays as regions then had to prepare two documents-one for the donor and one for UN-Habitat. This meant that although the regions had experts, they did not have the time and resources to prepare and translate more than one formulated project.	This area has declined over time due to the increasing complexity of the projects and multiple donors. Several sets of project document formulation should have been developed as requested by regions and some of the members.
8. HQPRC has as great influence over overall UN-Habitat's reform process as it questions the PRC committees to improve project quality at design. HQPRC, influences what staff do and what they think which in turn drives and shapes individual and organizational behavior.	This has improved over time in that the HQPRC influences the reform process and adherence to MTSIP. However, in many cases, the HQPRC is powerless to prevent RPRCs and others from 'pushing through 'some emergency and other projects of dubious quality.	This situation is largely due to the HQPRC not being anchored to a higher level of management during the time under evaluation. A second factor with respect to influence is the Secretary being under contract, rather than being full time staff and not having full time staff under the position. This was apparently due to lack of funding. The evaluator also notes the low participation of the Steering Committee other than to approve finalized projects.

**TABLE 3.1:** Perceptions on the Strengthening of the PRC Mechanism

<b>Focus of the Strengthened PRC Mechanism (December 2009- March 2011)</b>	<b>Perception of Interviewees and Questionnaire Respondents (Evaluation Interviews 20122)</b>	<b>Evaluator's comments</b>
9. An agency-wide culture of RBM is slowly embedding, due to the HQPRC asking the right questions and continuously communicating the MTSIP vision.	The respondents agreed that RBM is slowly embedding in UN-Habitat albeit mostly through the PRC, not emerging from the units. The MTSIP vision was more embedded than RBM as it was well documented.	A UN-Habitat model for Monitoring and Evaluation and Project cycle management exist but not updated beyond 2003. RBM concepts are not integrated into either document and should have been to further the agency-wide culture of RBM and make RBM the driving force.
10. HQPRC has a gate keeping role and is a reliable clearing house for projects. It is an invaluable strategic instrument for driving organization-wide reforms, including institutionalization of results-based management.	Respondents found the gate keeping role of HQPRC is well in place and is reliable for clearing projects. As to driving organization wide reforms, this was not apparent from the respondents, although the existing projects were using RBM as their organization-wide standards. This was attributed to the quality of the proposals using the new guidelines.	The evaluator finds that the PRC is a strategic instrument for reforms in project proposal writing. As RBM is not yet embedded throughout Un-Habitat beyond the project proposals, but also within its own structure, it cannot said to be the driving force for reforms.
11. Evidence emerging from discussions with staff shows a healthy appreciation of the value of having a more methodical and rigorous design process.	This area has greatly improved in that those preparing proposals are now more methodical and some regions are developed their own checklists to make better designs.	This attribute is commendable but the PRC has to advance further to create more tools and checklists to be used in different settings and for different audiences.
12. Individual learning that occurs in the course of project reviews is said to be inestimable and invaluable to most programme staff. Diverse perspectives have led to high quality decision making.	Fifty per cent of those responding agreed with this. Others felt that in some cases where the PRC membership does not have the expertise or recognize regional expertise, there was less learning. The diverse perspectives need to be documented if they are to influence decision making.	The lack of diverse and flexible tools is apparent and the non-documentation of a UN-Habitat RBM model, updated project cycle management, M&E and Best Practices, limit the degree of individual learning. There was no evidence of ongoing training in the above subject matter, although the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit carried out an unspecified training in M&E.
13. Decision making on resources allocation (MTSIP, Development Account Funds, etc.) the processes were perceived by many as very transparent, inclusive and solicitous both horizontally and vertically.	To date, due to non-clarity of the procedures after approval with respect to financing, along with inflexible ceilings for the various types of funding (internal programmes versus development programmes, unrealistic financial thresholds and unclear guidelines on umbrella projects, emergency projects and foundation projects). The Steering Committee and HQPRC (which lacked authority) were not anchored to higher level management to enable them to make decisions which were integrated horizontally and vertically	The mechanism has a flow chart which clearly shows how decisions are made by the Steering Committee, HQPRC and other PRC. However, it is not clear how the PRC and its relationship with RBM and project cycle management are factored into activities in the other divisions of UN-Habitat.



**TABLE 3.1:** Perceptions on the Strengthening of the PRC Mechanism

Focus of the Strengthened PRC Mechanism (December 2009- March 2011)	Perception of Interviewees and Questionnaire Respondents (Evaluation Interviews 2012)	Evaluator's comments
14. Senior management support to PRC has been clear, consistent and unequivocal. It has set the tone and seriousness by ensuring that important PRC decisions are respected.	Most of the respondents in senior management expressed support for the PRC and its decisions. For the respondents not in senior management there was occasional tendency to try to bypass the PRC especially with emergency projects but these cases were few. It was agreed that the Steering Committee was not active. A rewards system needs to be developed for those delivering MTSIP results to better develop a results culture (trophies, employee of the month).	Unless senior management takes a stronger role through a higher authority in UN-Habitat or a strengthened Steering Committee, its support will not be equivocal.

These three components are considered key dimensions for an RBM life cycle approach expected in the UN-Habitat project proposals. The evaluator also took into consideration whether or not the document used UN-Habitat Results-Chain Terminology.

The projects were rated on a scale of 1 to 3 with 3 being the highest.<sup>30</sup> The results show overall that the project documents developed in 2011 were of higher quality than those written prior

<sup>30</sup> Scale:3=proposal components fully matched to RBM component; 2= partly matched to RBM component and 1= poorly matched and unclear. Where the logic model for RBM is applied, there is a participatory approach with stakeholder involvement in the planned project and the logic model clearly states the steps taken for the development results, showing the results (describing the measureable change). Where the performance measurement framework using RBM is applied, a structured plan is visible for the collection and analysis of performance information. This framework allows managers and stakeholders to use real time information and progress towards achievement of the outputs and outcomes of the project. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators are visible. Where there is risk analysis there is a profile for risk management over the reporting schedule of the project, driven by aid effectiveness and good management.

to 2011. This result is very positive and is a reflection of the professional work of the review committees. It matches the comments of the presenters who stated that they had improved in their skills of proposal writing as they gained experience from working within and alongside the PRCs.

### 3.3 EVALUATION FINDINGS ON EFFICIENCY<sup>31</sup>

This section presents findings on efficiency drawn from analysis of the documentation provided to the evaluator against the comments of the respondents. These relate to the period of evaluation from December 2009 until September 2011.

<sup>31</sup> 'Efficiency'= Efficiency' is defined as the utilization and usability of resources or inputs, such as money, materials and manpower, in relation to the expected outputs (project proposals aligned to the MTSIP), capacity of the PRC to deliver the expected outputs to the expected standards and on a timely basis. In addition, efficiency also examines the 'Usability and applicability' of the tools which form the foundation for the procedures of the mechanism.

**TABLE 3.2:** Summary of Ongoing Challenges

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- 1 Time wasting in PRC Meetings continues to be an issue. This continues to be an issue as time is wasted and meetings still get cancelled. Members have not read the documentation due to its magnitude. It is suggested more frequent meeting, lowering the financial ceiling to enable RPRCs have more authority, eliminating multi-donor proposals to be evaluated by RPRCs, eliminating briefs or proposals. The majority 80% wanted the meetings to discuss proposals only. This is because they have the capability to develop briefs at country level. Secondly the brief template has become over-complicated and is more of a proposal than a brief. There needs to be streamlining of the meeting's agenda, more virtual members and a wider range of tools, limiting meetings to discussions of proposals not briefs and leaving multi-donor project proposals out of the PRC. Inconsistency in the position of chair and co-chair slows down meetings and delays project approvals. The PRC chairman leads for only six months. There is also inconsistent attendance by substantive members.

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  - 2 PRC members, both alternate and virtual appointees, are not reading the documents in advance. This is a common challenge faced by all and worsening as the formulation document gets more and more complicated. Many members are now delegating to their officers in an effort to cut their workload. It was suggested that more virtual members be recruited. If the project proposal was broken into part, whereby subject matter experts look at certain sections and those involved in M & E, finance look at other sections, this would save time. A small percentage of respondents found it intimidating to present briefs and proposals to very senior management.

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  - 3 Lack of a central source for reliable and up to date documentation which synthesizes the three areas of Best Practices, RBM and project cycle management. There now exists significant information and documentation on practices related to the subject matter in the proposals, but less on best practices, RBM and project cycle management. These need to be gathered and circulated. The website for such databases needs to be improved. In a changing organization, such as UN-Habitat where re-structuring is taking place, The MTSIP committee should develop a priority ranking for high-value results that organization should pursue to accelerate the achievement of the MTSIP Focus Area results. There has to be greater clarity on what high value or high priority projects are and these need to be part of guidelines and best practices.

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  - 4 Exemption procedures needed to be identified and incorporated into the mechanism. There need to be more exemption to the two tier process, such as projects funded by other donors and those below a raised financial ceiling. The PRC process is overloaded in terms of the project approval process. This over-complexity can lead to implementation problems and will frustrate users.

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  - 5 Along with training in the divisions and units, corporate resource allocation needs to be improved. Lessons of experience from pilot projects should be shared widely and strategically. Systematic organization learning is critical for superior decision making especially in informing the organization how to leverage the agencies limited resources. UN-Habitat must provide time and structured occasions for learning (RBM, lessons learned). The planning units (including M&E Unit) and Information Services Section must work closer together to promote understanding of the UN-Habitat results change and to popularize the MTSIP Results Framework and subsequent planning documents. Most staff especially those in the regions are not well versed with these processes and the subsequent planning documents. The Evaluation Unit (formerly called the M&E Unit) does develop a plan of priority projects which need evaluation. Lack of resources (staff) prevents full coverage as most evaluations are carried out by an independent consultant managed by the Evaluation Unit.

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  - 6 Policy has to be set for evaluation of development projects. After approval, there is no way to be sure the project has succeeded. There needs to be an M&E policy should be in place to guide staff and the PRC on what size of projects should have mid-term evaluations, or summative evaluations or both, or none. There needs to be incorporating in every project document, funding resources for baseline data collection and monitoring indicators if using RBM. UN-Habitat has to increasingly evaluate projects through its own Evaluation Unit.

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*N=43 respondents*

**TABLE 3.3:** Review of Sample Project Document Adherence to RBM

No.	Name of the Project	Year proposal submitted	Logic model of RBM	Performance Management Framework	Risk Register
1	Enabling Access of Koshi Flood Affected People to Water and Sanitation Facilities in India and Nepal	2009-2010	2	2	1
2	Adequate Housing for All	2011	2	2	2
3	The Cities and Climate Change Initiative SUD-NET	2011	3	3	3
4	Planning for UN-Habitat as a GEF Agency	2009-2010	2	1	1
5	Gender Equality Programme	2011	3	3	3
6	Capacity Building for Land Conflict Management in South Sudan	2011	3	3	3
7	Training and Capacity Building Development in Support to Land policy initiative in Africa	2011	3	3	3
8	Towards sustainable solutions in Improved living conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon	2011	3	2	2

The reformed mechanism was 'Satisfactory' in that the positive aspects—higher quality proposals and greater participation by experts at headquarters and regional levels- outweighed negative aspects: a very detailed, sometimes cumbersome, complicated set of tools.

There was also no system for incorporating knowledge, especially best practices and RBM capacity building in UN-Habitat. The review process stopped after proposals were approved. It was not well linked to the next step of RBM. According to the respondents, the time required to prepare the draft(s) briefs and proposals is a number of days, often conflicting with their other job tasks. In some cases, proposal formulation delayed the start date for some projects.

The respondents also found that there was rigidity on the part of the HQPRC with respect

to financial ceilings set for the approval at headquarters level. The procedures required that multi-donor proposals had to first be written in the UN-Habitat template. This often caused frustration as it was time consuming. It meant time wasted in writing over-detailed briefs, and proposals, translating them into English, and then, after approval, re-translating them into another language and another donors' format.

In terms of usability and being user-friendly, the mechanism is not efficient, in that it requires more testing and adaptation into a suitable electronic programme with drop downs and other features for ease of use. The tools are very lengthy and only in English which greatly increased the time taken by users to fill it in. Those using the templates found many challenges trying to understand some of the terminology especially on the logical framework.

Most of the respondents found the RBM concepts difficult to understand and found that the RBM training they received was not in-depth enough and therefore difficult to understand and apply. The evaluator notes that 362 persons received RBM training. Of this total 30% or 109 persons were trained from 2011 to 2012. The remaining 70% were trained earlier. The 2011-2012 results show that the training reached a significant number of persons in the divisions and senior management.

It is not clear if a needs assessment was done or if a curriculum and learning tools were created. The length of time taken to train the 362 persons is also not specified.

In 2008, it was noted that there was an RBM Task Force, mandated to develop a coherent framework for results-based management and knowledge management. It was responsible for the development of the PRC guidelines and tools, but its mandate ended after the quick win period.

The divisions were to take over the process of institutionalizing RBM at levels of programme planning, monitoring, evaluation, internal management and reporting. The mandate does not mention knowledge management, yet clearly MTSIP requires RBM and Knowledge Management to be implemented together. By the end of September 2011, the important aspects of knowledge exchange critical to embedding RBM (namely, capacity building programmes in RBM, project cycle management, best practices) were not done.

The proposal template is overly complex. The three components of the RBM<sup>32</sup> section are critical for good management, but some aspects of the

template are unnecessary and would fit better in an assessment tool, or addendum to the guide. These addendums could be used by the review teams when studying the proposals. An example is the overview section on 'linkages' which could be removed and put in an addendum to the template. The template is a UN-Habitat one and is unlikely to fit any donor template, e.g. the GEF format is a shorter simpler template. There is no document related to the theory/knowledge base of RBM. There is a Monitoring and Evaluation guide (2003) and a project cycle management guide (2003). These are both out of date and make little reference to RBM. It is understood that the Evaluation Unit is working on a draft manual on M&E, delayed with new restructuring.

The results chain terminology sheet is one of the tools used in the mechanism. It does not sufficiently define the concepts to which it refers. The mechanism guide also makes little reference to RBM or knowledge management. A guide for RBM/Knowledge Management specific to UN-Habitat was not prepared. There was also not enough reference to and incorporation of the UNDP Result Based Handbook and other guides such as the UNDP RBM model.

The required resources for the Secretary to carry out the role stated in the TOR were not provided. There was need for a full time Secretary, not a consultant Secretary. The staff and other operational needs were not budgeted for. The PRC was also not given the full authority it needed as the Steering Committee was not active. It has been suggested that linking the PRC to higher management would give this authority, but unless higher management is ready to be more active, the authority will not be realized. The same applies to the main resource of the mechanism—the templates. They need to be

<sup>32</sup> *The three components of RBM are: the logic model; the performance measurement framework; and, the risk register.*

streamlined and simplified. The outcomes of the PRC (such as best practices and lessons learned) need archiving for resource management to be efficient.

### 3.4 EVALUATION FINDINGS ON IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

This section presents the findings related to sustainability<sup>33</sup>—the likelihood or probability that the PRC is capable to continue or sustain its core activities within the context of an RBM approach. The strengthening of the PRC mechanism falls under one of the ‘quick wins’ of MTSIP 2008-2013. This means it is one of the priority action areas to ensure implementation of the MTSIP on a sound footing.

As stated in the MTSIP, the quick wins were designed “to introduce changes in work methods, intra-divisional alignments, institutional procedures and processes, while relying on minimal additional resources<sup>34</sup>”.

For the mechanism this meant PRCs playing a critical role in institutionalizing RBM at the planning stage<sup>35</sup> and not only as Quick Win solution. Although training was conducted on RBM and programme review principles, techniques and implementation, this was not enough and conducted mainly in 2009. This is reflected in a summary table on training clearly showing 70% of training was done before 2010.

This meant that staff were not sensitized enough over time to internalize RBM guiding principles, techniques and implementation. The lack of sensitization contributed to the significant resistance expressed by some respondents towards the mechanism. This also limits impact and sustainability. The templates were found to be very professionally constructed and covered all aspects of project proposal formulation as well as the core requirements for RBM planning. However, over time, they became more and more complicated. There was continued emphasis on procedures which should have changed over time. Examples are low financial ceilings and the requirement that all types of projects go through the PRC, including those funded by other donors.

The rigidity of the PRC towards changing some of the procedures affected the acceptability of the templates and other tools by the regional staff. UN-Habitat did not identify reliable up to date sources on M&E, and project cycle management, or develop an RBM guide. This meant most definitions related to RBM proposal writing, were not UN-Habitat specific. The respondents sent emails, memos and spoke up during the retreats to get the templates simplified. They have however, become more complicated.

The likelihood of positive impact and sustainability of the mechanism and its role in the forefront in embedding RBM, are possible only with changes to procedures and simplification of templates and other tools.

33 ‘Sustainability’ and ‘Impact’ refer to the continuity or probability that the PRC is capable to continue (sustain) its core activities within the context of an RBM approach.

34 MTSIP 2008-2013, p 25.

35 The mechanism was also responsible for quality assurance, programmatic coherence and alignment, ensuring horizontal integration of programmes, breaking of silos and mainstreaming of gender.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The Programme Review Mechanism has supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat.

### *(i) Degree of Alignment*

The analysis and rating of sampled approved projects were compared to the proposal templates. In all cases the approved proposals adhered to the three UN-Habitat requirements for alignment as follows: i) MTSIP Focus areas; ii) Focus areas expected accomplishments as defined in the MTSIP, and iii) the Work Programme Expected Accomplishments.

It is clear that the projects approved in the period under evaluation were also able to meet global standards for alignment, namely: i) Balancing the demand from the varying needs in the regions; ii) Maintaining alignment with the overall vision and mandate of UN-Habitat; iii) Delivering global stability while providing localized value; and iv) Delivering value within exacting financial and resource constraints.

The feedback from the respondents, external studies (Mbiba and Ekons, to name a few), and the analysis of the proposals showed that the proposals (for the period under evaluation) were aligned to the varying needs in the regions.

Specifically, a wide range of projects were approved. These were well designed to fit development needs in the regions, including post-conflict situations. At the same time, the

proposals maintained alignment with the overall vision and mandate of UN-Habitat. This was ensured through the formulation guidelines and the feedback given in person or virtually, to the presenters and the regions they represented.

In light of the instability existing in many of the countries represented by the regions, the proposals showed sensitivity to the need for gender and youth indicators. This illustrates how UN-Habitat was concerned with maintaining stability in the regions. The approved projects showed concern for use of local resources, and local initiatives.

There was also support for proposals that reflected global efforts for supporting human settlements. This has the potential to create stability in the regions where UN-Habitat is working.

### *(ii) Strengthening the Embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat*

The MTSIP and its Focus Area approach were designed to create a culture of change in UN-Habitat towards strategic management using RBM. The study of the mechanism against evaluation criteria was to determine whether or not the mechanism strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat, or not.

To a large extent, embedment of RBM was strengthened by the mechanism, at project formulation level. This is because of the improved systems and tools developed from December

2009. These sped up the process of programme review, while at the same time addressed quality assurance.

However, RBM is much more than tools and systems. To a large extent these are now in place. The challenge now is whether or not the approved projects have been implemented according to the formulated proposals. The degree to which the PRC has fostered a 'results culture' in UN-Habitat cannot be quantified, but much has been achieved. Staff are more sensitive to a results culture. More systems were needed throughout UN-Habitat for project cycle management (and a results based culture) beyond the step of project formulation.

There was not enough attention by senior management of UN-Habitat to the focus area 'Managing for Results'. For example senior management commitment in the Steering Committee, was lower than expected. The procedures and systems of the mechanism and its results focus were associated more with the Secretary and RPRCs than to senior management.

According to the respondents, UN-Habitat remains more driven towards resource mobilization and delivery targets, rather than results. It is suggested this is due to lack of systems to measure results well after projects start and lack of resources to RBM. The strengthened mechanism is evidence of this, as it was a quick win strategy designed for quick results using limited resources.

Finally, embedment is less strengthened as there is no result-oriented accountability regime. Accountability remains disjointed with a focus on the Secretary (who is a consultant) and less at the lower levels of UN-Habitat, which focus more on outputs, than results. Although there

is a stronger 'change culture' and 'leadership for results' in UN-Habitat, resistance to the mechanism procedures is also growing.

The increased complexity of the templates mean increased workload and a sense that completing the templates is a clerical exercise. The Programme Review Mechanism has showed effectiveness in providing quality assurance of projects and acting as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals.

A report of the PRC Secretariat for the period December 2009 to December 2010 states 'the ultimate goal of the PRC was to strengthen efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and projects'. The achievements for the same report include 'improved quality' evidenced in a remarkable improvement evidenced in the use of logical frameworks, strategies and risk assessments.

Certainly the evaluation findings show that effectiveness of the mechanism improved the situation prior to strengthening. The mechanism also addressed some of the challenges UN-Habitat staff faced in conducting high quality programme review. Having a two tier system for approval of briefs first and then proposals, and later submitting proposals for approval at the level of the Executive Director, is evidence of an increasing advisory role of the HQPRC.

However, the key person in the HQPRC (the Secretary) was only invited to the Steering Committee on invitation. As the Steering Committee was also not active, despite being the link with the Executive Director, it is likely that this advisory role was less than it could have been. In reference to quality control, the procedures and tools (template and the checklists), are directed at improving quality control. More important,

the three components used by UN-Habitat are recognized globally as best for quality control (and RBM specifically) were in the proposal template.

These three components were: the logic model, performance management framework and risk register. They were well designed. The risk register went beyond the components stated in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) model. There are very good sections on partner operational risk, financial risk, development risk and reputation risk. When applied, these three components can go far in quality assurance.

However, UN-Habitat and the mechanism specifically lack several important aspects related to quality assurance. UN-Habitat has put great effort into technical expertise for the review team and the selection of a small team of substantive, alternate and virtual members. There is however, no specific person for the three areas of quality assurance, writing and editing. The members attending the PRC meetings gave their own comments related to the technical aspects of the proposals, but there was no clear agenda for quality assurance.<sup>36</sup> There are records kept of minutes of meetings. These do reflect an organized systematic format for the meetings to cover technical, quality assurance and editing. It was found that in some cases, the members had not read the proposals in advance.

The mechanism's sphere of influence stops after proposal formulation—for quality assurance, there needs to be procedures in UN-Habitat to move beyond project formulation. A starting point could have been the development of

<sup>36</sup> Review meeting agenda: introduction, topic, context, overview, summary, discussion of controversial or potentially high impact item and summary. It is not clear who is leading, author of the documents.

selection criteria for members to qualify to be in the PRCs. This would have made them more inclusive of operational staff, and staff from the Finance and M&E Units. The roles of the finance and M&E were not well spelled out. This contributed to their low participation in the PRCs.

In some cases, the 'owners' of the approved proposals were not sure how to link up with finance after approval. A quality assurance policy has also not been defined for the mechanism, spelling out basic concepts, such as statistics, standards, criteria, indicators and benchmarks.<sup>37</sup>

The Programme Review Mechanism has led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects approved in UN-Habitat. There is strong evidence to indicate that the project proposals below USD100,000 reviewed by Division Directors and those under USD1 million reviewed by the RPRCs improved in quality after the review process strengthening in December 2009. The proposals were well written, well aligned to MTSIP and the work programme. This means they are more likely to succeed if implemented according to the proposal guidelines.

In many cases (of project formulation), it was the first time for the writers/presenters to use such a clear logic model, performance management framework and risk register. This was seen positively. When applied, these components can go far in ensuring projects are completed as planned. Since there is no compiled report

<sup>37</sup> Statistics: Data collected in a systematic way; Indicator: data or statistic that indicates or signals something; performance indicator: data that signals some aspect of performance; criterion: aspect or elements, against which a judgment is made; standards: specification of aspects or elements or principles to which one should conform or by which quality is judged; Benchmark: A point of reference to make comparisons.



on sampled projects which were evaluated, this cannot be verified. The Strengthening of the Programme Review Mechanism has resulted in greater programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, more collaboration across organizational units and made a contribution to institutional learning.

At the time of the evaluation, UN-Habitat was in the process of restructuring. However, during the period under evaluation, institutional structuring reflected the focus areas in which UN-Habitat worked. In many cases each division worked in a closed environment, similar to a silo, where all services, activities and funding were concentrated on what the individual division had planned. The process of programme review generated much information which was partially circulated but not shared across all the organizational units. This was because there was no central repository for the information. As the evaluation findings indicate, the process of programme review can produce many lessons learned and best practices. These were not well circulated.

There were units/divisions for knowledge, monitoring and evaluation and finance, to name a few, with which the programme review mechanism would be expected to be linked. However, according to those interviewed, there was no clear linkage mechanism across the organizational units to make this possible. The process of documenting and synthesizing the lessons learned, best practices and other outcomes of programme review, has not been extensively done. There is evidence of collaboration with the gender unit in defining gender and youth core values and then mainstreaming their integration in UN-Habitat. There is need for a computerized simplified template to increase accessibility and collaboration.

Despite the gaps in collaboration, having a Programme Review Committee with select members cutting across the organizational units, did much to make UN-Habitat activities more coherent. The members were able to expedite knowledge sharing and experiences. Dialogue was also strengthened, at least between members of the HQPRC and between the HQPRC and the RPRCs. The collaboration was also enhanced by the participation of the virtual members on the PRCs and by mentoring carried out by the Secretary.

## 5. LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

### 5.1 LESSONS LEARNED

There are several lessons learned from the strengthening of the project review mechanism in the period of December 2009 to September 2011. These are:

1. It takes time to get people to buy into change including a new way of planning and formulating briefs and project proposals. Professionals and others need the opportunity to participate and provide feedback on new processes. When this occurs, people will accept change and own it. This is very true if it is shown to contribute to the success of their workplace activities;
2. The credibility of a new process or approach in an organization is relative to the authority and responsibility it is given by senior management. Anchoring an activity or process higher in an organizational hierarchy (to an active management) makes it more credible and creates greater compliance to common outcomes ;
3. The higher the quality of a project proposal, the more likely the project will respond to peoples' needs and therefore be achievable. Relevance of a project is not guaranteed by the quality of the project proposal, but it is a major factor in achieving project results and creating positive impact.
4. People must be ready, willing and able to use new methods, processes and technologies for them to adapt. Unless all three factors

(readiness, willingness and ability) are well in place, changes will not sustain. Over time, the presenters (and the regions they represented) accepted the benefits of high quality proposal writing.

This means they were more willing to use the template. However, readiness and ability need to be developed. The writers of proposals lack the time and other resources to design proposals as their work calendars are already demanding.

### 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

*Recommendations to increase the extent to which the Programme Review Mechanism can support alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthen the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat.*

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that a Task Force or working group be formed to define alignment of the mechanism to the restructuring underway at UN-Habitat. It has to be determined how the new structure will identify areas of focus for upcoming projects. The HQPRC should be part of this process. In the interim, the sections of the template that refer to the focus areas should be revisited and emphasis placed on alignment with MTSIP and the work plans.

**Recommendation 2:** Multiple criteria for portfolio developed should be identified, inclusive of quality assurance criteria. A priority is the identification of a larger portfolio. This process should be collaborative. There is need to involve informal groups and other stakeholders,

such as communities situated in the various countries where UN-Habitat is working.

The process of improving alignment could be expedited by hiring a consultant portfolio manager. This person can support portfolio selection and determine the best combination of projects per region. Emphasis should also be placed on replicating innovative projects which have worked well in the past (whether funded by UN-Habitat or not). Resource management is also an issue-the available resources should match work demands. The availability of resources should be forecast and resource conflict resolved. A bottom up approach to portfolio management is recommended. This is because the regions have learned much about project formulation. They may be best placed to identify potential regional projects. At all times, the projects should be prioritized to align with the MTSIP strategic plan.

**Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that information be better managed in line with the UN-Habitat knowledge management strategy and RBM. This will create:

- Better availability of information for divisions to deliver services, collaborate, management themselves and trace processes and decisions;
- Better preservation and safeguarding of information related to all aspects of UN-Habitat including those related to programme review; and,
- Structuring of information storage so it can operate effectively throughout UN-Habitat.

These steps can be supported by an alignment stream exercise, whereby UN-Habitat assesses the documentation as a whole, then disaggregating

it according to the ongoing work plans and the re-structuring. It is recommended that training tools be developed which are specific to UN-Habitat as an institution. Training/re-training should be conducted. This will strengthen the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat. A training needs assessment should precede the training. There needs to be emphasis on identifying the trainees for training, i.e. those who will apply the training.

The UN-Habitat staff need explicit RBM training relevant to the needs of their division. They also need support when designing indicators for project proposals. The expected roles of key staff involved in the Programme Review Committees need to be identified, so that the individual committee member's level of participation is complementary to the other members. It should not duplicate what other members are doing. This will help them work better together and speed up the review process. UN-Habitat should identify government and development partners who are seeking results focus approach instead of a delivery focus, so they can better strategize together for the future. The tools for programme review need to be tailored to fit regional needs as well as headquarters needs.

*Recommendations to increase the Effectiveness of the Programme Review Mechanism in providing quality assurance of projects and act as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals*

**Recommendation 4:** It is recommended that changes be made to the procedures and systems used for the programme review mechanism. The two tier structure should be replaced with a single tier system directed at proposals not briefs. The two page brief as set in the guide should be adhered to. The Steering Committee

should be revived, but its composition should be changed to reflect senior management and lower divisions. As much as possible membership should be vetted. Selection should be based on the individual member's experience in project proposal formulation. There also needs to be emphasis on recruiting Programme Review Committee members who have technical skills related to a sector, but also those with skills in operational management, quality assurance writing. Each division should have a focal person attending some of the PRC meetings. This person should have writing and editing skills as well as being able to represent her/his division in terms of quality assurance and technical skills. There has to be a more concerted effort in UN-Habitat to manage knowledge, best practices and lessons learned. This will mean that the staff who is formulating projects will have access to more reliable information. They will need less technical support.

The membership on the PRCs should rotate and they must read the documents thoroughly before contributing to programme review. The Executive Director and most senior levels of management should be to set a policy for quality assurance, RBM and final approval of projects. The PRCs should still be anchored to senior management, so they have authority. But, the responsibility for programme review should rest in the hands of the alternating members. The regional PRCs have improved skills in project proposal formulation, so they need to take a stronger role. If they have more control of project review, the process of project implementation can move faster. The support the regions most appreciated was the guidance and mentoring provided by the Secretary. The Secretary must visit the field on a regular basis. The Secretary position should be full time and staff need to

be provided to support the Secretary. There is also need for staffing or consultants who can work on the synthesis of lessons learned, best practices, development of databases and general editing. Recommendations for the Mechanism to better support the improvement in the quality of programmes and projects

**Recommendation 5:** It is recommended that UN-Habitat develop its knowledge library inclusive of databases of initial proposals and final proposals. This will enable comparisons between the proposals and help identify changes and measure them. A quality assurance committee should be created, with focal persons identified per division who are ready to support quality assurance.

Once the standards, criteria, etc., are defined for quality assurance, audit trails can be developed to record the results of checking procedures, including approved proposals. Quality assurance can also be improved if there is regular evaluation of sampled projects at mid and final levels of completion. The PRCs should be part of this process as should the M&E Unit.

Regular evaluation will enable UN-Habitat to identify the outcomes and impact of the projects. At the same time, monitoring can establish whether or not the RBM components of the proposals were actually applied. UN-Habitat can develop its own quality assurance policies, or adapt them from others. It is important to share experiences in project formulation with other donors and partners. As well as RBM training, UN-Habitat needs to hold workshops where staff and others can share lessons learned and best practices in project formulation.

**Recommendation 6:** It is recommended that the checklist in use by the PRC Committee be revisited

to create a quality assurance plan checklist (to be used on a regular basis to assess a number of projects). A well designed form (inclusive of in-depth analysis of requirements against comments) should be developed for the PRC members' ease of use during meetings. This will improve the process of proposal review beyond just comments by the reviewers in minutes. The formal review of projects should be preceded by informal reviews. This can save time during the PRC meetings as the presenter will be very clear on what is expected. Recommendation to increase the degree of success of the Programme Review Mechanism in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, in facilitating collaboration across organizational units and contributing to institutional learning

**Recommendation 7:** It is recommended that UN-Habitat takes a stronger role in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, and facilitating collaboration and institutional learning. A clearinghouse or library should be developed to include information on indicators for RBM and other aspects of project management, such as quality assurance, best practices and lessons learned.

As well as an improved shorter template for proposals, it is recommended that UN-Habitat develop templates to better link regions to finance and other departments, after their proposals have been approved. This can increase the coherence of the funding process. Most important of all, UN-Habitat should take charge of the change process stimulated by the mechanism. This means exerting authority on the divisions to receive training and formulate high quality proposals. The divisions have to take

a strong role as focal persons involved in quality assurance, but also be ready to be part of the committees in charge of programme review.

In order to keep up the pace of change, every effort must be made to minimize the workload of those preparing proposals. The standardized proposal template also has to be computerized, linked to other divisions and in several languages.

### 5.3 NEXT STEPS

One of the lessons from this evaluation is that people must be ready, willing and able to formulate high quality project proposals. Some of the causes of resistance to proposal writing are the complexity of the templates and time taken to write the proposal, to name a few. As recommended, UN-Habitat should reduce the templates in size and omit the template for briefs. It is recommended that with the restructuring process underway, UN-Habitat identifies means to recognize, remunerate and reward those who formulate proposals and those participating in the programme review meetings. This can motivate people.

If the task requirements for programme review are part of job descriptions, this can also help. The recommended—one focal person per division—can speed up the process of change in UN-Habitat and stimulate greater involvement in RBM, programme review and quality assurance.

The recommendations should start with clarification of programme review in light of the re-structuring and how the previous Focus area approach will be replaced. This means changes to the systems and procedures of the programme review mechanism. In the interim, UN-Habitat can inform its partners and the donors on the new approach to programme review.

# ANNEXES

## ANNEX I: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### EVALUATION OF THE STRENGTHENED PROGRAMME REVIEW MECHANISM OF UN-HABITAT

#### 1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

As part of the organization-wide reforms, UN-Habitat developed a six year Medium Term Strategic Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013 and formally adopted results based management (RBM) as a management tool for achieving MTSIP results. Strengthening the Programme Review Committee was one of the quick wins identified in the MTSIP. Accordingly a review of the Programme Review Committee (PRC) was undertaken in 2009 and it made specific recommendations for reforming the programme review mechanism.

The review identified a number of structural and operational inadequacies, which had significantly reduced the overall effectiveness of the programme review mechanism. Challenges identified in the review included lack of clearly defined mandate and authority; lack of anchoring to any management structure, leading to poor coordination of its functions. It also found that the membership of the PRC was too large and unstable and lacked the necessary gravitas and authority to institutionalise change; there was weak alignment between the programmes and projects reviewed, biennial work programme results and UN-Habitat mandates; there was poor internal collaboration and cooperation between the different units in UN-Habitat; and lastly it was observed that lessons learnt and

good practices identified in the field did not systematically inform programme formulation and implementation. The strengthened PRC was aimed at addressing the above cited problems, including problems related to quality of projects at formulation/design.

In line with the review's recommendations, a new structure for a strengthened programme review mechanism was designed through a comprehensive and participatory process. The reformed programme review mechanism comprises of two interlinked structures: the MTSIP Steering Committee and four Programme Review Committees. The PRCs include a Programme Review Committee based at headquarters and three regional-based committees serving UN-Habitat's three Regional Offices with delegated authorities and accountabilities. The MTSIP Steering Committee, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director, and comprising of Division Directors, oversees the Programme Review Committees to ensure consistent focus on the achievement of MTSIP results, as well as programmatic alignment, inter/intra-branch and division consultation and collaboration and coherence.

The MTSIP Steering Committee is the primary strategic and oversight body, while the PRCs are the programmatic nerve centre responsible for linking policy with concrete operations. As a strategic management tool, the reformed PRCs were mandated to address most of the challenges identified in the PRC review. The

strengthened PRC was therefore going to promote a more effective results-based system of planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

The new programme review structure was endorsed by the MTSIP Steering Committee and subsequently launched in September 2009, along with a PRC Guide. One of the recommendations of the PRC review was that the HQPRC be supported by a dedicated secretary, a position that is yet to be established.

Through a series of training sessions, program staff received orientation in RBM and project management, including on the PRC structures, processes and tools. Since the December 2009, the PRCs have reviewed over 100 project briefs and documents.

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION**

The purpose of this evaluation is to review the performance of the reformed program review mechanism, identify results and lessons learnt and provide recommendations for its future work.

The evaluation has been requested by senior management to examine the progress of the strengthened structure, especially what is working and why, and what is not working and why, as part of a learning and improvement process. The evaluation is very timely as UN-Habitat is currently undertaking a major organizational re-structuring and in the process of preparing its Strategic Plan for 2014-19.

## **3. USE OF EVALUATION RESULTS**

The recommendations will inform decisions of senior management on the future direction of the programme review mechanism and the format of its programme/project review processes.

Key findings, including lessons learnt and recommendations of the evaluation will be presented to senior management and members of the PRCs in draft form and final version. The final report will be made available to UN-Habitat staff on Habnet and available on [www.unhabitat.org/evaluation](http://www.unhabitat.org/evaluation).

The final report will be presented to senior management team and the Planning Unit for a management response. A plan of action and time frame for implementation of the recommendations will be prepared by the Planning Unit. The implementation of recommendations will be monitored by the Monitoring & Evaluation Unit.

## **4. SCOPE**

The scope of the evaluation is the reformed programme review mechanism, which is the MTSIP Steering Committee, HQ PRC and the three regional PRCs. The evaluation will assess the performance of the programme review mechanism with emphasis on its role as a key quality assurance mechanism for programmes/projects at entry and as a strategic instrument for the organization-wide implementation and embedment of RBM.

The evaluation will cover the period from December 2009 to July 2011.

## **5. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The evaluation will assess the performance of the programme review mechanism based on five criteria. These are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.



## 6. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What are the important factors that have affected the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the programme review mechanism and its contribution to RBM embedment in UN-Habitat?
2. To what extent and how has the programme review mechanism led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects, and strengthened management and use of RBM, programmatic coherence, linkages between programmes and projects as well as contributed to institutional learning?

Has the implementation of the programme review mechanism strengthened the implementation and embedment of RBM in the delivery of UN-Habitat's goals/objectives/MTSIP?

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the new programme review mechanism, its structures, processes and tools have addressed previously identified challenges. Lessons learnt from this evaluation will inform the future direction of the project review mechanism, the PRCs and revisions aimed at ensuring continuous improvement of organization-wide efficiency and effectiveness.

Specifically the evaluation will document progress made and results achieved towards realizing the objectives of the strengthened programme review mechanism:

3. Assess the overall relevance and effectiveness of the program review mechanism and interlinkages of the MTSIP Steering Committee and the four PRCs, including the value added by the regional PRCs;

4. Analyse the relevance of roles and responsibilities assigned to the PRC mechanism including membership of the PRC committees;
5. Assess the relevance of the processes and tools of the PRCs in institutionalizing RBM in the organization;
6. Assess the performance to determine the effectiveness of the PRCs and specify the results achieved in the areas of results focus, alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results
7. Sample project briefs and documents with a budget below USD 100,000 reviewed by division directors and those under 1 million reviewed by the regional PRCs to determine the quality of the review process; and quality of approved project briefs and documents, including use of good logical framework and indicators of achievement;
8. Establish the contributions of the programme review mechanism to internal co-operation and collaboration across organizational units for the achievement of organizational results; embedment of RBM; programmatic coherence; coordination of HQPRCs and RPRCs and organizational learning.
9. Identify lessons learnt and best practices
10. Provide recommendations for improvement, in line with best practices for results based management (in the UN system) and make specific recommendations on effective budget thresholds for PRC reviews.

## 7. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will include:

- Review of relevant documents such as the MTSIP Action Plan 2008-2013 and MTSIP Addendum (HSP/GC/21/5/Ad.1), work programmes and programme/project documents; the PRC Guide, the programme and project cycle manual, 2003 and other relevant documents;
- Interviews with individual programme and project staff at HQ and in the regional offices, especially a sample of those that have submitted projects to the PRCs; Members of the MTSIP Committee; members of the PRCs;
- Focus group discussions as appropriate
- Programme and project staff questionnaire
- Participation, i.e. attend a couple of PRC meetings.

## 8. WORKPLAN

The evaluation will be undertaken by a consultant. The consultancy will be for a period of 30 days spread over ten weeks. The consultant will submit a draft report within six weeks. The Consultant will spend 10 days to do document review, interviews and teleconferences with ROLAC, ROAP and Headquarters staff and 20 days writing up and revising.

The consultant will be contracted through the M&E Unit and submit the draft report to the M&E Unit, which will share the draft report with relevant staff at Headquarters and in the regional offices. The consultant will receive consolidated comments after two weeks and produce a revised final draft report within two weeks.

He/she will prepare a powerpoint presentation of the draft evaluation report to senior management and members of the PRCs; Where possible regional offices will participate by video conference and if not possible, will submit written comments after reading the draft report.

The consultant will spend five working days at UN-Habitat Headquarters in Nairobi conducting interviews.

A detailed work plan will be agreed with the consultant at commencement of the assignment.

The deliverables of the evaluation will be a comprehensive report of no more than 30 pages and outlined as per the UN-Habitat evaluation report format (exclusive of annexes) containing an executive summary of key findings and recommendation; list of recommendations with action and timeplan; and a power point presentation.

## 9. CONSULTANT

### Competencies

**Professionalism:** In-depth knowledge and proven experience of carrying out evaluations; and in-depth knowledge of the programme/project management cycle and results-based management;

**Communication:** Strong oral and writing communication skills in English, including strong report writing skills.

**Planning and organizing:** ability to work under pressure, develop and work according to planned schedules and meeting agreed deadlines;

**Teamwork:** Good interpersonal skills and ability to establish and maintain effective working relations in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic

environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity, including gender, as well as provide "clients" with information on progress made and setbacks on related issues.

### **Qualifications**

**Education:** An advanced university degree, preferably in the social sciences, business management and other relevant areas, or a combination of education and relevant experience, with expertise in evaluation and institutional change.

**Work Experience:** At least 15 years experience in project management and results-based management, with specialization in evaluations.

**Language:** For this position, a strong command of the English language is required, both oral and written. Strong report writing skills necessary.

**Other skills:** Proven ability to work in multi-disciplinary and multi-national teams.

### **Management and reporting**

The Office of Management will manage the evaluation and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit will provide technical support to the consultant.

### **Remuneration**

The remuneration will be determined by UNON in line with qualifications and experience.

## ANNEX II: REVISED EVALUATION WORK PLAN

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the 30 day interim evaluation is to review the performance of the reformed UN-Habitat Programme Review Mechanism. UN-Habitat developed a project review system as part of six year Medium Term Strategic Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013 as a means to ensure continuous improvement of organization-wide efficiency and effectiveness. A peer review in 2009 of the Programme Review Committee (PRC) made specific recommendations for reforming the mechanism, in order to address a number of structural and operational inadequacies. Some examples were lack of clearly defined mandate and authority; and lack of anchoring to any management structure, leading to poor coordination of its functions. It also found that the membership of the PRC was too large and unstable and lacked the necessary gravitas and authority to institutionalize change; there was weak alignment between the programmes and projects reviewed, biennial work programme results and UN-Habitat mandates; there was poor internal collaboration and cooperation between the different units in UN-Habitat; problems related to quality of projects at formulation/design stages and lastly it was observed that lessons learned and good practices identified in the field did not systematically inform programme formulation and implementation.

The evaluation is expected to study the reforms undertaken by UN-Habitat to address most of the

challenges identified in the PRC review and to promote a more effective results-based system of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. At the same time the evaluation was to be carried out to understand if there is continued consistent focus on the achievement of MTSIP results, as well as programmatic alignment, inter/intra-branch and division consultation and collaboration and coherence.

The evaluation has been initiated by senior management of Un-Habitat at the request of SIDA and the expected results are two-fold: to support a learning and improvement process at UN-Habitat through analysis of progress of the strengthened structure; and to support decision making towards the upcoming organizational project based re-structuring and UN-Habitat Strategic Plan for 2014-19. The recommendations and lessons learned will also inform decisions of senior management on the future direction of the programme review mechanism and the format of its programme/project review processes.

### 2. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In line with the purpose, the evaluation will focus on the following sets of key questions related to context, process and outcomes. The questions will be expanded by the consultant as deemed appropriate and the consultant has discretion as to how many of the questions will be administered. The questionnaires can also be emailed.

- To what extent has the Programme Review Mechanism supported alignment of projects to the work programme and MTSIP results, and strengthened the embedment of RBM in UN-Habitat?
- How effective the Programme Review Mechanism has been in providing quality assurance of projects and as an advisory body to the Executive Director on project approvals?
- To what extent, and how has the Programme Review Mechanism led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects? Sample project briefs and documents with a budget below USD 100,000 reviewed by division directors and those under 1 million reviewed by the regional PRCs to determine the quality of the review process; and quality of approved project briefs and documents, including use of logical framework and indicators of achievement;
- How successful has the Programme Review Mechanism been in ensuring programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects, in facilitating collaboration across organizational units and contributing to institutional learning?
- What are the lessons learned from the experience of the Programme Review Mechanism, for example, related to project quality assurance, project approval, the organizational structure of the Programme Review Mechanism, and effective budget thresholds for PRC reviews?
- What are the main recommendations for an effective project review system in UN-Habitat?

As the scope of the evaluation is the reformed Programme Review Mechanism, which is being through the MTSIP Steering Committee, HQ PRC and the three regional PRCs the evaluation questions are expected to cover these bodies.

### 3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation will assess the objectives and tasks of the Programme Review Mechanism and the extent to which these were effectively and efficiently achieved or are expected to be achieved. The evaluation will be based on four criteria: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. As the evaluation is directed at an organizational mechanism, not a project, the term 'relevance' is defined as 'acceptance and imbedding of the mechanism/PRC in its environment (UN-Habitat). 'Effectiveness' in this case refers to the 'extent to which the present services (of the mechanism/PRC) meet the needs of relevant target groups (the presenters of briefs and projects). The definition of 'Efficiency' is 'the present utilization of resources (inputs) in relation to its outputs and refers to (amongst others) use of resources (information, guidance, mentoring from the PRC ) by presenters as reflected in their finalized project proposals. In addition, 'efficiency' will also examine the capacity of the PRC to deliver the expected outputs. 'Sustainability' and 'Impact' refer to the continuity or probability that the PRC is capable to continue (sustain) its core activities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluator relies on global standards for evaluating organizational capability as defined by SIDA and others such as MDF.

#### 4. TIMETABLE AND WORKPLAN (FEBRUARY 6-MARCH 15, 2012)

The priorities of the workplan are to complete questionnaire design and interviews within the first two weeks, to allow the consultant time to carry analysis. This means facilitation by the Programme Planning & Coordination Unit to arrange interviews for the consultant with stakeholders and to provide all requested documentation including sampled project files and databases. The work plan will be agreed between UN-Habitat and the consultant at commencement of the assignment and the consultant will report to the Chief, Programme Planning & Coordination Unit, Programme Support Division, and UN-Habitat. The Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Unit will be responsible for quality control of the evaluation process and the final report and will ensure the consultant adheres to the UNEG standards. Upon receipt of the draft report, the Chief, Programme Planning & Coordination Unit will share it with the Chief, M&E Unit, and other relevant staff at Headquarters and in the regional offices for

review and comments. The Programme Planning & Coordination Unit will consolidate all the comments received and forward those to the Consultant, who will, after two weeks, produce a revised final draft report.

The table below outlines when each phase is expected to be completed over the 30 day period (six weeks).

#### 5. DATA TO BE USED BY THE CONSULTANT

The evaluation will collect data which is informative, will respond to the evaluation questions and enable analysis. This means data about the various groups and individuals which have featured in the Review Mechanism, such as presenters, PRC Committee and others.

The consultant will generate data from a review of nine sampled projects (1<sup>st</sup> submission and final project documents) to enable comparison in the quality and outputs of the reports both before and after PRC inputs.

**TABLE 1:** Completion of Phases

Output / Activity/Phase	Timeframe
Evaluation Workplan Plan developed	End of First week
Draft questionnaires developed	Mid First week
Documentation study	End First week
All interviews, study of database and file comparisons (first and approved project submissions)	Beginning 2 <sup>nd</sup> - and 3 <sup>rd</sup> week
Presentation of the Draft Report	Beginning of fourth week
Submission of Final Report	End of fifth week

The consultant will have access to already published data which is to be made available to the consultant is shown below:

- Sampled initial submitted projects and their finalized proposals
- Databases
- Initial submitted proposals
- Finalized proposals
- MTSIP Action Plan 2008-2013 and MTSIP Addendum (HSP/GC/21/5/Ad.1), work programmes;
- Peer Review of the Implementation of UN-Habitat's Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan (2008-2013);
- Review Report of the Programme Review Committee (2009), Self-Assessment Report of the PRC: Retreat of 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2011;
- Manual for Project and Programme Cycle Management (2003), PRC Guide, Project Development Templates and Cover Letters, Minutes of PRC Meetings, and Programme/project documents reviewed by the PRCs
- PRC Participation Tables
- PRC Accomplishment Tables
- Number of Projects approved
- Project approved by Regional Offices Tables
- Total Value of Projects Approved Tables
- Summary of all Approved Projects Tables
- Percentage Distribution by Value Tables
- Distribution of projects per subprogram and Value Tables

## 6. DATA COLLECTION METHODS TO ANSWER EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The consultant will utilize the following methods of data collection:

1. **Literature and Document Review** would be conducted on the initial documents provided to the consultant, involving review of submitted project proposals and final submissions. This method has an advantage as documentation provided is generally official and therefore reliable in terms of submitted contents. It shows the historical perspectives of the project and enables the consultant become familiar with different perspectives.
2. **Comparative Studies** of sampled project from two different periods of time will be conducted. This means sampling from two time periods a variety of projects with different subject matter and reflecting the focal areas of UN-Habitat's MTSIP. The consultant will examine and compare the initial proposal submission to the PRC and the finalized one to understand how PRC recommendations were integrated into an improved project. The study of documents would be combined with interviewing the presenters of the proposals.
3. **Key Informant interviews** will be conducted with key players; members of the Steering Committee, PRCs, Presenters, Un-Habitat support staff from Monitoring and Evaluation Department, Finance and Administration who have contributed to the Mechanism. This method is reliable as it enables flexible and in-depth consultation. It is easy to implement with open ended questionnaires but has the risk of one-

sided presentation and interpretation. The consultant will utilize this method along with pre-designed questionnaires.

**4. Database Study** The consultant will access the UN-Habitat database as it relates to the mechanism and validate findings, at the same time carrying out data analysis to produce additional findings.

**5. Attending PRC Meeting** The consultant will attend one PRC meeting where presenters and PRC discuss briefs and project proposals. This will provide an opportunity for the consultant to understand the group dynamics, PRC management style and quality of the briefs and proposals submitted.

## **7. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

The consultant will utilize data collection tools best suited to the methods used to answer the evaluation methods. This will include two sets of questionnaires; one for the governance level of key players (PRC Committee members, Steering Committee members, etc) and another for the presenters. The questionnaires will be

administered by the consultant and serve as a guide to stimulate discussion and gather relevant information. The two questionnaires are shown in Annex 1.

## **8. REPORTING OF EVALUATION FINDINGS AND DELIVERABLES**

The following deliverables will be provided:

- Work plan with milestones;
- A Power Point presentation at the beginning of the evaluation outlining work plan and milestones;
- A comprehensive quality report of no more than 30 pages and outlined as per the UN-Habitat evaluation report format;
- A Power Point presentation of the draft report summarizing key findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the evaluation



## ANNEX III: REVISED DRAFT QUESTIONNAIRES

### QUESTIONNAIRE 1: MTSIP STEERING COMMITTEE, PRC COMMITTEE AND OTHERS (M&E, FINANCE, PRC SUPPORT STAFF<sup>2</sup>)

(Opener) The Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013 (MTSIP) has as its goal "to ensure an effective contribution to sustainable urbanization". Its overarching objectives (Fas) are six mutually reinforcing focus areas (advocacy; monitoring and participation; participatory and urban planning; management and governance; pro-poor land and housing; environmentally sound and affordable infrastructure and services; strengthening human settlement finance systems; and excellence in management). As well as compliance with the MTSIP Results framework and Biennial work plan, projects are expected to be designed in line with clear logic within professional project formulation guidelines. In an effort to maximize the quality of project design while at the same time minimizing the time taken to review and approve projects, a new tiered mechanism was developed by UN-Habitat in September 2009. This included an overall MTSIP Steering Committee and a PRC which would provide a forum to discuss briefs and project proposals before approval, thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects and programs upon implementation.

The evaluation underway is expected to review the objectives and tasks undertaken by the PRC (as the implementing body of the program review mechanism) and the extent to which these were effectively and efficiently achieved.

1. Explain your role on the Committee.
2. Have you/your unit participated as expected? (time, area of input, degree of input)
3. Has the new mechanism met your expectations? Explain.
4. Has the quality of the project design improved? In which parts of the project document are presenters strongest? Weakest?
5. Are the emerging projects more in line with the work programme? Expected results? RBM principles?
6. How effective has the MTSIP Steering Committee been in providing overall leadership to the mechanism?
7. Comment on timeliness and management efficiency of the MTSIP Steering Committee?
8. How effective has the PRC been in providing a forum for review of projects in terms of their quality? Acting as an advisory body to the Executive Director?

<sup>2</sup> Questionnaire 1 is designed to be administered to Governance level participants in the mechanism.

9. Comment on leadership, management efficiency and level of cooperation of the PRC.
10. Comment on timeliness and management efficiency of the PRC especially in showing value for money?
11. Is the current membership of the PRC suitable for effective project review and advisory to the Steering Committee? Explain.
12. How effective have the three RPRCs been in preparing and submitting briefs and projects to the PRC?
13. Comment on the degree of research, use of best practices and RBM and adherence to templates by the three RPRCs?
14. How effective have the departments of UN-Habitat been in preparing and submitting briefs and projects to the PRC?
15. Comment on the degree of research, use of best practices and RBM and adherence to templates by the three RPRCs?
16. Has the Programme Review Mechanism increased programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects? Explain.
17. Has the Programme Review Mechanism facilitated collaboration across organizational units (which ones?)
18. How does the mechanism contribute to institutional learning?
19. Has the mechanism contributed to the efficiency of your own unit?
20. Can you think of some lessons learned from being part of the Programme Review Mechanism?
21. Comment on the degree on internal collaboration and cooperation between the different units of UN-Habitat. Is the level adequate to support a stronger more effective PRC?
22. Comment on the adequacy of the budget support for PRC related activities.
23. Comment on the adequacy of the support from the business support unit.
24. How can the role of the PRC be enhanced in the new structure? Would a greater degree of authority, autonomy, anchorage, enhance its role? How?
25. Can you recommend some guidelines for emergency projects? Joint projects? Umbrella projects? Budget reviews? Foundation funds? Development Account Funds?
26. Do you have any other recommendations on what has to be done?

## **QUESTIONNAIRE 2: CLIENTS-STAFF AND PRESENTERS**

(Opener) The UN-Habitat Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013 (MTSIP) has as its goal "to ensure an effective contribution to sustainable urbanization". Programs and projects funded by UN-Habitat are expected to comply with the MTSIP Results framework and Biennial work plan, and also to be formulated in line with clear logic within professional project design guidelines. In an effort to maximize the quality of project design while at the same time minimizing the time taken to review and approve projects, a new tiered mechanism was developed by UN-

Habitat in September 2009. This mechanism included an overall MTSIP Steering Committee and a PRC which would provide a forum to discuss and review briefs and project proposals before approval, thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects and programs upon implementation. The PRC thus reviews all briefs and projects, ensuring quality assurance and alignment to the MTSIP Fas and the UNDAF. The evaluation underway is expected to review the objectives and tasks undertaken by the PRC (as the implementing body of the program review mechanism and the extent to which these were effectively and efficiently achieved.

1. Explain the project proposal you submitted to the PRC (objectives, beneficiaries/outputs and budget).
2. How long did it take you to prepare the project proposal for first submission to the PRC? (date start and date completed) When did you prepare the proposal (date)?
3. Explain the research you had to conduct to prepare the project proposal (best practices, Fas, collaborators etc).
4. Did you submit a brief to the PRC? If yes, what feedback did you receive? (clarity on strategy, results articulation, resource allocation and budget) How did you apply the feedback to the proposal formulation?
5. Did the comments at the presentation help you make your proposal more relevant?
6. Did the comments at the presentation help you better state the strategy?
7. Did the comments at the presentation help you address feasibility of your project?
8. How efficient & effective was the PRC in carrying out its role reviewing and clearing your brief/and or project proposal? Explain, giving reasons for your answers.
9. How efficient & effective was the PRC Secretary in carrying out the leadership role reviewing and clearing your brief/and or project proposal? Explain, giving reasons for your answers.
10. Comment on the quality of the PRC advice (systematic and concrete programme formulation and implementation guidance steps). Explain, giving reasons for your answers.
11. State aspects of the PRC review of project presentation which can be improved.
12. Has the review and clearance process improved your skills/the skills of your organization/unit in planning and documenting future briefs and project proposals? Explain, giving reasons for your answers.
13. At this point, assuming that the project you presented is under implementation or completed, explain some of the successes and challenges faced? How many of these can be related directly to the feedback from the PRC and subsequent revisions.
14. Comment on your project formulation skills.
15. Comment on your RBA skills.
16. Should the PRC take on a further role in monitoring projects they have reviewed? Explain, giving reasons for your answer.
17. Are there any learning experiences or lessons learned from the PRC review which have contributed to learning in your institution or unit?

18. Has the mechanism contributed to the efficiency of your own unit/organization?
19. How can the role of the PRC be enhanced in the new structure?
20. Do you have any other recommendations on what has to be done?
5. To what extent, and how has the Programme Review Mechanism led to an improvement in the quality of programmes and projects? Give some examples if possible of improvement, or non-improvement.
6. How does the Programme Review Mechanism ensure programmatic coherence and linkages between programmes and projects?

### QUESTIONNAIRE 3: DISCUSSION POINTS

Dear UN-Habitat Regional Colleagues: As per introduction letter from Rosa Muraguri, Secretary of the PRC, I am the external consultant for the evaluation of the Program Review Mechanism, the PRC and the RPRC Program Review. Your input in the confidential questionnaire shown below would be appreciated. Your responses will greatly assist in the process of evaluation. Please fill in your response under each question and return to me at [findkathleen@yahoo.ca](mailto:findkathleen@yahoo.ca) or [webbroyale@yahoo.com](mailto:webbroyale@yahoo.com) as soon as possible. Thanks in advance!

KATHLEEN LINDA WEBB,  
Evaluation Consultant

1. Country.....Region.....
2. Explain your past/present role on the RPRC?
3. How effective is your RPRC? Give reasons for your answer, please.
4. How well do you work with the PRC at Headquarters? Give reasons for your answer, please.
7. How does the Programme Review Mechanism facilitate collaboration across organizational units in your country office(which ones?) and how does it contribute to institutional learning?
8. What are some of the lessons learned from the experience of the Programme Review Mechanism, for example, related to project quality assurance, project approval, the organizational structure of the Programme Review Mechanism, and effective budget thresholds for PRC reviews?
9. What recommendations can you suggest for a more effective structure for the Mechanism?
10. What recommendations can you suggest for more effective coordination in the Mechanism?
11. Any other comments and recommendations, please?

THANKS!

Send to [findkathleen@yahoo.ca](mailto:findkathleen@yahoo.ca)

## ANNEX IV: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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2. Renewable Energy Projects to improve WATSAN Delivery in Lake Victoria
3. IMIS BAC
4. Adequate Housing for All
5. The Cities and Climate Change Initiative SUD-NET
6. Planning for UN-Habitat as a GEF Agency
7. Gender Equality Program
8. Dream Balls for Hope and Youth in Africa
9. Capacity Building for Land Conflict Management in South Sudan
10. Training and Capacity Building Development in Support to Land policy initiative in Africa
11. Towards sustainable solutions in Improved living conditions of Palestinian Refugees in

Lebanon

12. Debris Management in Haiti

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## ANNEX V: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Altogether, the evaluator interviewed 53 people from Un-Habitat, including twenty-three persons met in face to face interviews, eight persons at a PRC (PAG) meeting on February 23, 2012, 20 email interviews<sup>3</sup> (regional and headquarters) and one conference call to two members of the the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Listed below are some of the names of the individuals interviewed excluding those interviewed via email questionnaires<sup>4</sup>. In some cases, as well as face to face interviews, people also sent email summaries to the consultant.

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**Andersson, Cecilia**, Safer Cities Programme, Urban Development Branch, Global Division

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**Barugahare Martin**, Chief, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Office of the Executive Director

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**Contreras, Liliana**, Programme Management Officer, Regional Technical Cooperation Unit

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**Diphoorn, Bert**, Director, Human Settlements Financing Division

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**El-Sioufi, Mohammed**

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**Grimard, Erik**, Director, ROLAC, R-PRC Chair

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**Guiebo, Joseph**

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**Karl, Guenter O**, Acting Chief, Partners and Youth Branch, Monitoring and Research Division

---

**Kitio, Vincent N.**, Chief (Ag), Urban Energy Section

---

**Kiwala, Lucia**, Chief, Gender Mainstreaming Unit, Monitoring and Research Division

---

**Maseland, Jose**, R-PRC Secretary, ROAAS

---

**Mbye, Doudou**, Senior Human Settlements Officer, ROAAS

---

**Melin, Thomas**, Senior Policy Advisor, SUD-Net Coordinator, Global Division

---

**Mioch, Jaana**, Office of the Deputy Executive Director

---

**Murguri-Mwololo, Rosa**, International Development Consultant, Secretary to the PRC (PAG), Programme Planning Unit, Programme Support Division

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**Mutizwa-Mangiza, Dorothy**, Senior Programme Officer and Chief, Programme Planning Unit, Programme Support Division

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**Nyabera, Hellen**, Head, Information Management Unit, Information Services Section

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<sup>3</sup> A total of 65 email questionnaires were sent out. Of these a total of X responses were received.

<sup>4</sup> Job titles in most cases do not reflect the current restructuring underway at the time of the evaluation

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**Olepot, Geoffrey**, Programme Planning Unit,  
Programme Support Division

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**Omwega, Asenath**, Monitoring and Evaluation  
Unit, Office of the Executive Director

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\* **Rudd, Andrew** (email)

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**Sirica, Leila**, R-PRC Secretary ROLAC

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**Valasquez, Elkin**, Chief, Urban Governance  
Section, Coordinator, Safer Cities Global  
Programme

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**Wellwita, Ananda**, Human Settlements  
Officer, Urban Economy Branch

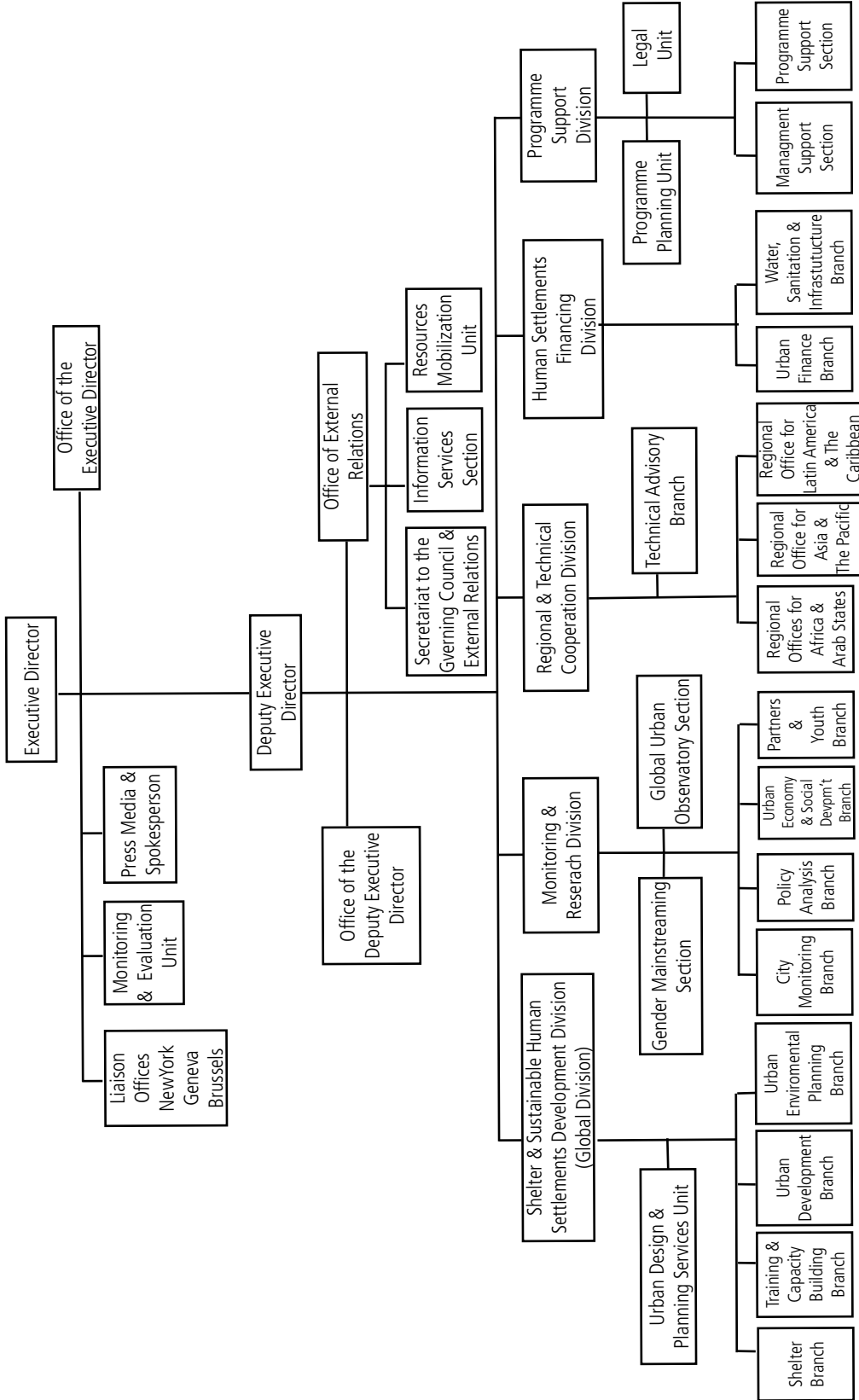
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**Zhang, Xing Quan**, Chief, Urban Economy and  
Social Development Branch

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# ANNEX VI: UN-HABITAT ORGANISATIONAL CHART



## ANNEX VII: HQPRC SECRETARY TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Organizational Setting and Reporting

#### Relationships:

The PRC Secretary will be the back bone of the whole review mechanism, a coordinator and participant in all the review structures and repository of all project related information going from RPRC and HQ PRC to the MTSIP Steering committee and vice versa and the whole programme and project development and review processes.

The PRC Secretary is accountable to both OED/PSD and the HQ PRC chair.

**Responsibilities:** Within the delegated authority, the Program officer will be responsible for the following duties:

### COORDINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF ALL PROGRAMMES REVIEW COMMITTEES TO ENSURE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Coordinates all activities of the HQPRC and participates in RPRCs and MTSIP steering committee meetings
2. Ensures participation by appropriate divisional heads and chiefs and when not available to ensure substitution.
3. Coordinates virtual members of the HQPRC to ensure they provide comments to the RPRCs on time.
4. Invites technical experts to HQ PRCs if and when necessary.
5. Ensures timely follow-up of decisions or recommendations of HQPRC, HQPRC, RPRCs and MTSIP Steering Committee
6. Ensures timely communication and feedback to Committee on all urgent and important decisions
7. Schedules meetings and ensuring quorums for HQPRC, RPRCs and MTSIP Steering Committee
8. Ensures timely circulation of documents in advance of scheduled meetings
9. Ensures timely circulation of Committee Reports to relevant persons and committees
10. Ensures timely follow-up of decisions or recommendations of HQPRC, HQPRC, RPRCs and MTSIP Steering Committee
11. Ensures timely communication and feedback to Committee on all urgent and important decisions
12. Submits required progress reports on decisions made by the HOPRC
13. Keeping of calendar and attendance records of all Committee meetings
14. Prepare minutes of each meeting of the HQ Steering Committee and reports on proceedings of RPRCs and the MTSIP Steering Committee
15. Schedules meetings and ensuring quorums for HQPRC, RPRCs and MTSIP Steering Committee

16. Handles all logistical arrangements for meetings of the HQ Steering Committee

### **REVIEWS ALL PROGRAMME/PROJECT BRIEFS AND DOCUMENTS AND PARTICIPATES IN ALL PRC MEETINGS**

1. Reads, reviews and gives preliminary comments and advice on all the documents submitted to the MTSIP Steering Committee and to the three RPRCs and the HQPRC- including those with budgets under \$100,000 reviewed at division level, well in advance of PRC meetings to ensure compliance to guidelines and quality control and will advise the originators accordingly.
2. Ensures timely preparation of reports, templates and documents to be used in HQ PRC meetings.

### **ADVISES CHAIRS OF RPRCS AND DIVISION DIRECTORS AND STAFF ON THE REVIEW PROCESS**

1. Advices and supports all divisional directors and staff on preparation or revisions of Project Briefs, Project Documents and follows up on all documents
2. Ensures timely preparation of reports, templates and documents to be used in HQ PRC meetings
3. Ensures timely circulation of documents in advance of scheduled meetings
4. Ensures timely preparation of reports, templates and documents to be used in HQ PRC meetings
5. Ensures easy access to PRC reports and minutes and makes sure they are widely distributed to staff

### **SUPPORTS THE PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS**

1. In regard to the program performance review and working closely with M&E, reads evaluation reports, collates and analyses lessons learnt for the purpose of strengthening decision making at the PRC, and to inform program formulation, planning and management in-house.
2. Working closely with M&E, review a sample of selected completed projects evaluation reports and provides substantive response to HQPRC and MTSP steering Committee.
3. Working closely with M&E, prepares TORs for consultants to carry out independent review of evaluation and progress reports of completed projects.
4. Initiates application of knowledge management to program design and implementation
5. Invites (internal and external) subject matter technical experts to project review sessions
6. Enlists consultants to carry out studies that give timely and relevant insights to PRCs into emerging areas of concern
7. Ensures easy access to PRC Review reports and minutes and makes sure they are widely distributed to staff
8. Coordinates activities of HQPRC hired consultant and ensuring quality, final delivery and presentation of Reports to PRC.
9. Follows up on all PRC recommendation from the Program Reviews
10. Follows up and ensures availability and

implementation of all planned and ad hoc capacity building tools and activities of the PRCs

11. Makes sure the data are shared with all those involved in decision making and follow up on the implementation of any decisions

### **PREPARES ANALYTICAL REPORTS ON THE ALIGNEMENT OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS TO MTSIP RESULTS**

1. Prepares periodic analytical update reports and develops summaries on the status of on-going projects for presentation to the HQPRC, for instance -
  - Status on Focus Area funding,
  - Geographical distribution of approved projects,
  - Geographical distribution of funding,
  - Biennial comparisons of funding by themes FA, and geographical distribution
  - Categories of collaborating partners
  - Emerging trends and issues
  - Lessons learnt
1. Prepares periodic briefs for the HQPRC on existing regulations, policies and practices and their positive or negative implications on the review process and ultimately on the implementation of MTSIP

### **MANAGES ALL KNOWLEDGE RELATED TO THE REVIEW MECHANISMS AND PROCESSES**

1. Continuously collects and compiles crucial program related intelligence to inform the decision making process of the HQ PRC
2. Facilitates learning exchanges and information dissemination between all committees (HQPRC, RPRC, MTSIP Steering Committee)
3. Makes Periodic reports to from division directors, RPRCs and HQPRC to MTSIP
4. Develops and maintains a Web page on the review mechanisms and maintains a database on all approved, rejected and to be revised projects in an easily retrievable form and in a database that is user-friendly easily accessible to all Habitat staff.

### **Work implies frequent interaction with the following:**

All HQ Divisional Directors and Chiefs, members of the RPRCs and the MTSIP steering committee.

**Results Expected:** Serves as effective coordinator and key intelligence repository between the PRCs and the MTSIP. Plays the lead role of support towards quality adherence and compliance to set standards in all Concept Briefs and Project Documents prior to their submission to the HQPRC. Serves as an effective communicator and feedback loop across all committees.

## ANNEX VIII: PRC EFFECTIVENESS TABLES

The tables in this chapter are extracted from the PRC Secretariat Report. They show some of the quantitative results of the new mechanism by the end of its first year and are evidence of significant progress in terms of the program review mechanism contributing to UN-Habitat meeting its mandate of embedding RBM in the institution.

As per the mechanism guide regulations the projects reviewed by the PRC (2009-2010) represented those with a budget of USD 100,000 and above. Projects supported by MTSIP funds and non-earmarked Foundation funds were also reviewed by the HQPRC in the same time period, regardless of the size of the budget. MTSIP projects and regional emergency projects over USD 1 million were not required to submit Briefs; they developed project documents for HQPRC reviews. Table A<sup>5</sup> is evidence of the systematic aspects of the two tier approach in the reformed mechanism which contributed to its effectiveness.

Information with similar fields as in the above table was not collected, analyzed or presented in tabular form, FOR 2011. However, a study of the 2011 list of presentations showed there were 73 presentations to the HQPRC in 2011 of which 35 were briefs and 38 were project proposals. It was expected that other than emergency projects, all proposals would be preceded with a brief before submission to other donors or to the HQPRC.

<sup>5</sup> These figures match the presenter list for 2009-2010 with respect to the presentations by HQ and ROAAS.

The Table B shows that the RPRC was also active in the year 2009-2010 in terms of regional project approvals. It also illustrates compliance of the regions with respect to the funding ceilings set in 2009. A high number of projects were approved by the HQ PRC (63) were explained as due to the fact that all regional development projects above the value of USD 1 million had to be approved at the HQPRC.

Table C. shows the value of the projects generated in the same time period. Data was not collected and analysed for 2011; however, a study of the 2011 presenter list shows that of the 35 approved projects, the highest value projects was for USD20 million<sup>6</sup>, and the lowest value was for USD440,000. Three other projects were valued at USD15 million<sup>7</sup>, 13 million<sup>8</sup> and 10.2 million<sup>9</sup> respectively. This suggests that the value of the projects approved from the regions are rising, a positive development.

<sup>6</sup> The project "Achieving Sustainable Urban Development Priorities/Support to MTSIP in Achieving priorities of sustainable urban development" was presented to the HQPRC by Jaana Mioch for approval on June 28, 2011, valued at USD20 million to be funded by the Spanish Government.

<sup>7</sup> The project "Action for Urban Safety and Social Cohesion" was submitted by Elkin Velasquez on July 12, 2011 for USD15 million.

<sup>8</sup> The project "Shae Thot Water and Sanitation Project Myanmar" was presented to the HQPRC by Chris Radford on December 14, 2011 valued at USD13 million.

<sup>9</sup> The project "Program to Support the reconstruction of Housing and neighborhoods in Haiti" was submitted as a brief on June 28th, 2011 by Alain Grimard valued at USD10,266,350.

**TABLE A:** Number of projects reviewed by PRCs (December 2009-September 2010)

Description	HQ	ROAP	ROLAC	ROAAS
Total Number of Projects Approved according to regions	55	28	10	17
Total Number of Briefs and Project Documents reviewed	80	41	23	30
Number of projects Rejected	0	0	0	0

**Source:** PRC Secretariat Report

**TABLE B:** Projects Approved By Regional Offices December 2009 - September 2010

Regions	Below 100,000	100,000 to 500,000	500,001 to 999,999	Over to 1 million	
HQPRC	17	23	7	16	63
ROAAS	10	3	2	0	15
ROAP	9	8	4	3	24
ROLAC	1	4	1	1	7
ROEETC	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>110</b>

**Source:** PRC Secretariat Report

According to the UN-Habitat Secretariat Report (December 2009-December 2010) "Projects approved by the Asia Pacific office were of the highest value and amounted to 60% of the total value for all approved projects in UN-habitat in the last nine months"<sup>10</sup>. The same study found

that from the time of strengthening of the PRC in December 2009, projects worth a total value US\$101,702, 581.70 were approved.

<sup>10</sup> According to the Secretariat Report (December 2009-December 2010) p.28. Although some of them are development projects, three of the highest value projects are emergency/post conflict types in Afghanistan (Peace-Building in Afghanistan through Consolidation of Community Solidarity (PACCS) with a

value of US\$ 31,000,000.00, Strengthening Municipal and Community Development, Phase III, in Lashkar Gar, Helmand, Afghanistan with a value of US\$ 6,155,799.00, and Reintegration of Returnees and IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) Through Policy, Planning and Targeted Assistance with a value of US\$ 7,603,827.00).

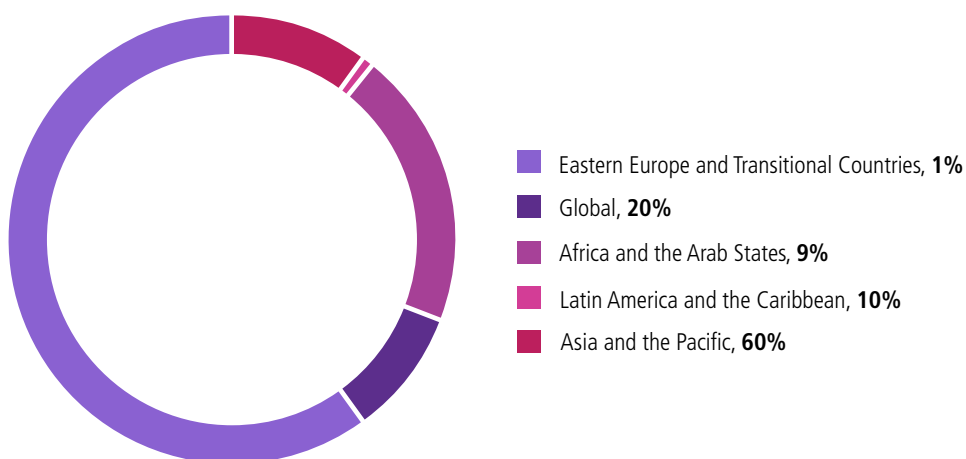
**TABLE C:** Total Value Of Projects Approved

Total Value of projects approved in different value Categories

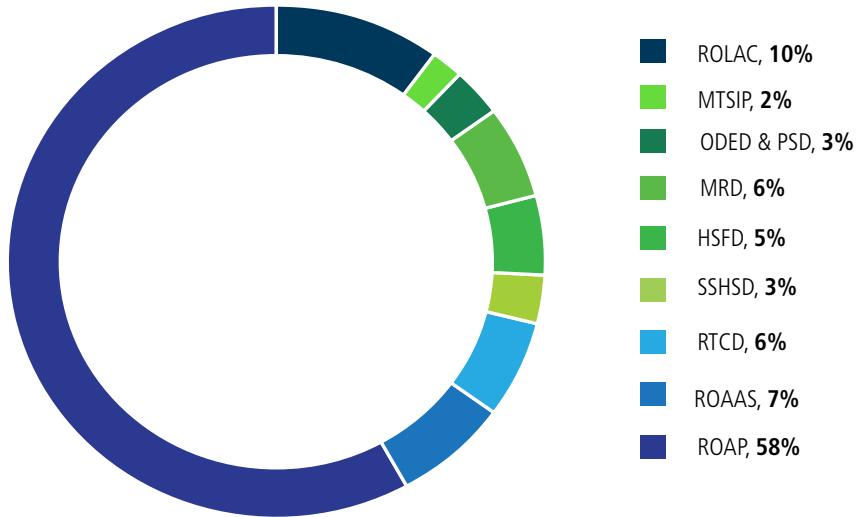
	Less than 100,000	100,000 to 500,000	500,001 to 999,999	Over to 1 million	
HQ	1,118,012.87	4,662,706.00	4,712,822.00	80,286,723.00	<b>90,780,263.87</b>
ROAAS	465,843.00	942,869.83	1,559,040.00	-	90,780,263.87
ROAP	561,048.00	1,852,294.00	3,204,524.00	-	2,967,752.83
ROLAC	30,000.00	1,479,114.00	798,808.00	-	5,617,866.00
ROEETC	28,777.00	-	-	-	2,307,922.00
	2,203,680.87	8,936,983.83	10,275,194.00	80,286,723.00	28,777.00

*Source: PRC Secretariat Report*

The following figures illustrate the pattern of partnership of the approved projects. Some were implemented with other UN-agencies while others were with non-UN partners including the private sector.

**FIGURE A:** Percentage value of all approved projects 2009 December-September 2010*Source: PRC Secretariat Report*

**FIGURE B:** Summary Of All Approved Projects For The Period December 2009 - September 2010

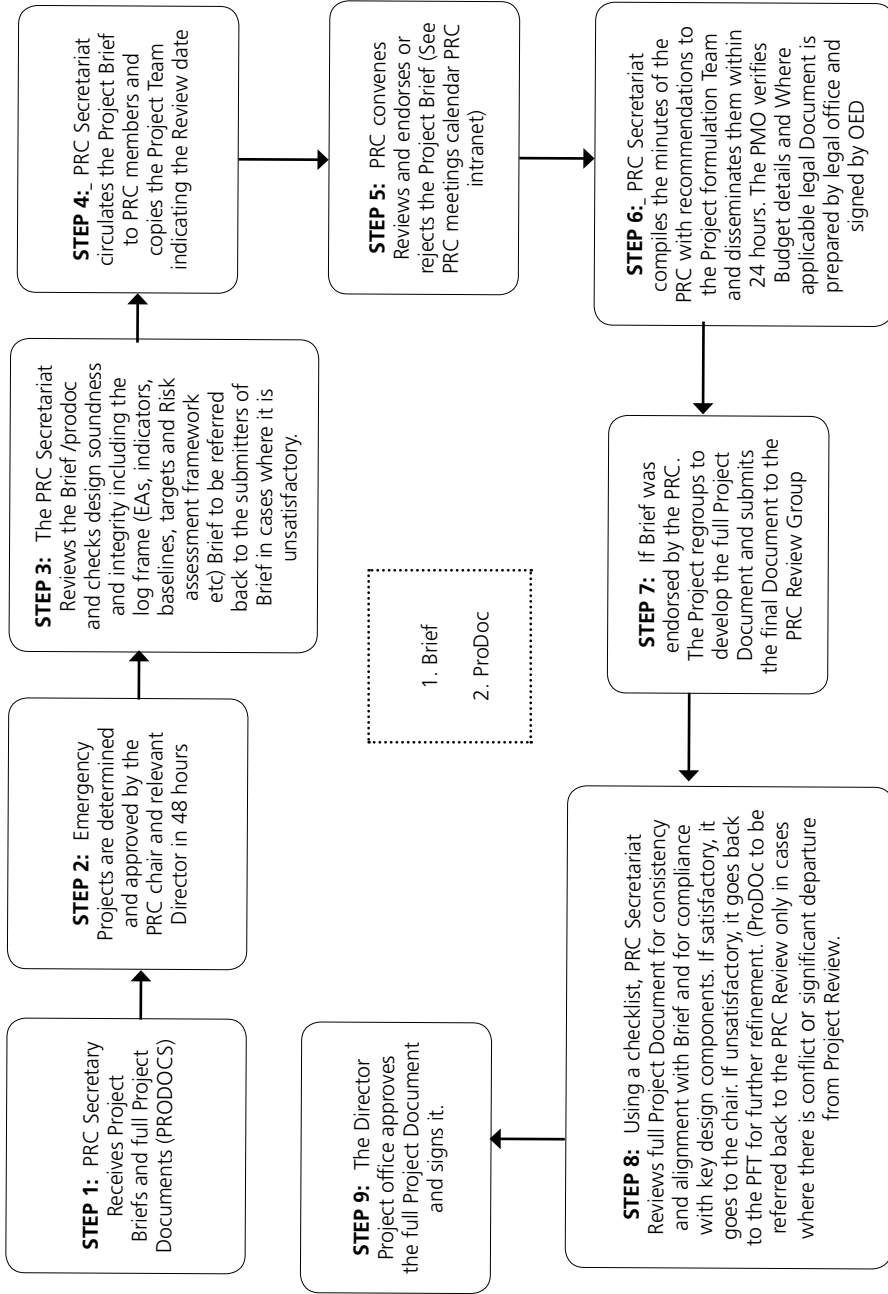


**Source:** PRC Secretariat Report

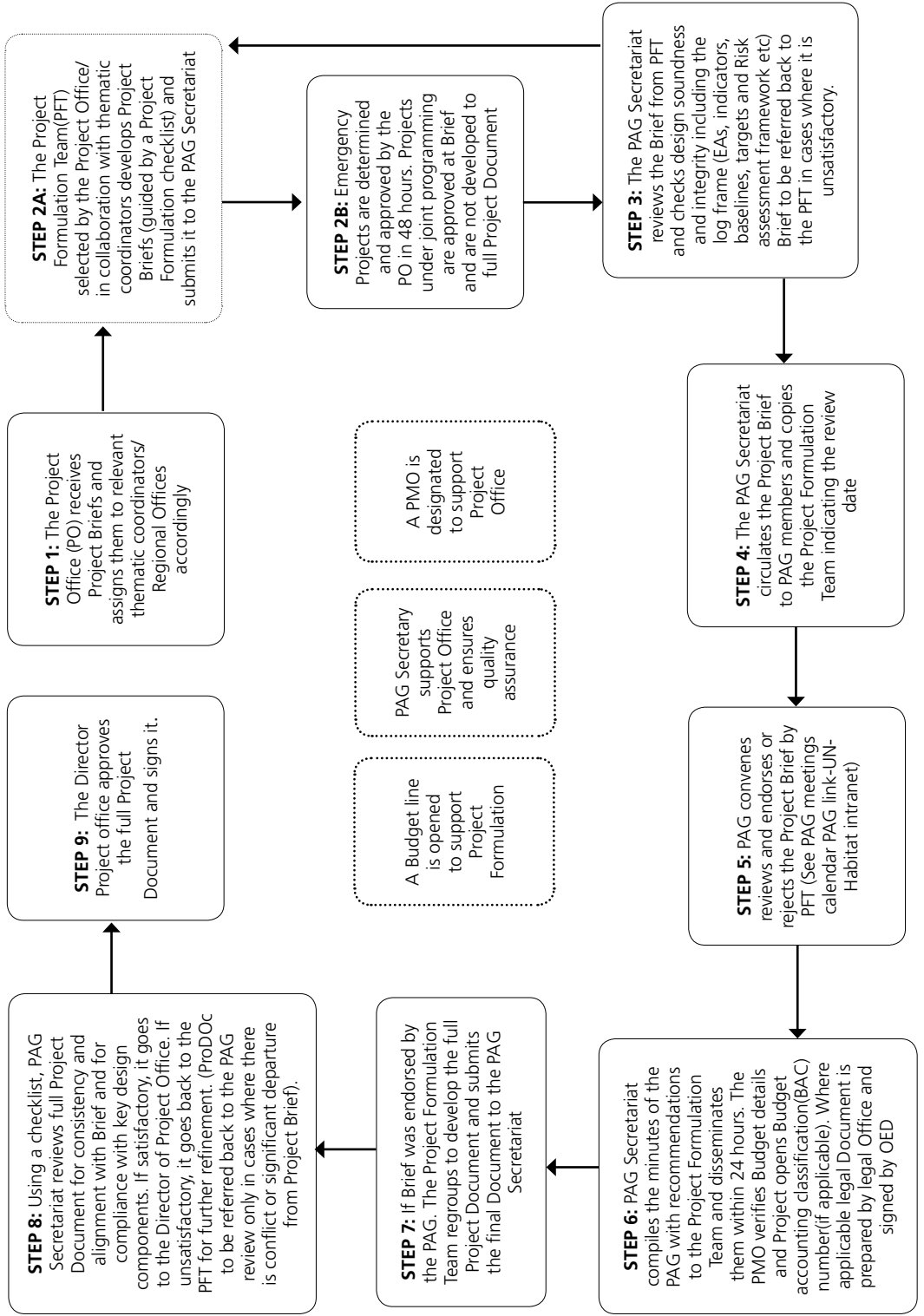


## ANNEX IX: PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESSES 2009 AND 2012

FLOW CHART: PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE (PRC): PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS 2009



**FLOW CHART: PROGRAM ADVISORY GROUP (PAG): PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS 2012**



# UN HABITAT

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